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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
With the rising cost of food, fuel, and utilities, are you still able to set aside a portion of your paycheck for savings?

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to cast your vote.

INSIDE



Student Plot

A group of third-graders—as many as nine boys and girls at Center Elementary School in south Georgia—in plot to attack a teacher.

NATION...Page 15

Couples in War

The Army is allowing scores of husband-and-wife soldiers to live and sleep together in the war zone.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18



Lampoon

It looks like a typical National Geographic cover. So what's Paris Hilton doing on there?

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20



⚡ Preventing the public release of the GAO report for as long as 30 days means that the members of Congress will not be informed of the many serious legal shortcomings of the important bill they are being asked to approve. ⚡

—Gov. Benigno R. Fitial

'GAO report being suppressed'

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



4TH ANNUAL KICK BUTTS DAY

Hundreds of participants from public and private schools, youth centers, children and youth programs, agencies, and organizations—all linking up to promote a “drug-free CNMI”—march from the Garapan Fishing Base to the Carolinian Affairs Office on Beach Road Garapan during the Department of Public Health Community Guidance Center's 4th Annual Kick Butts Day rally yesterday afternoon.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Car sales drop 23 percent in March

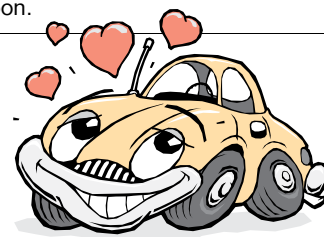
By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

23 percent last month, but the Commonwealth Auto Dealers Association believe the industry is still ahead of the curve as at-

tested by year-to-date numbers.

According to the March sales and market share report of the

See CAR on Page 4



The Fitial administration accused U.S. congressional staffers of “suppressing” a report by the Government Accountability Office on legislation to impose federal law on CNMI immigration.

See GAO on Page 4

PSS Saipan down to 11 school buses

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rienne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System is facing a critical shortage of buses for about a month now, forcing existing buses to make three to four runs each in the morning and afternoon instead of the usual two each way.

The PSS, which needs at least 30 buses to make bus riding services run smoothly, only has 18 in its lot. On top of that, seven of

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OPA is owed \$6.5M by autonomous agencies. **PAGE 2**

Lack of flight activity imperils Tinian, Rota ILS. **PAGE 3**

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Local

OPA is owed \$6.5M by autonomous agencies

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Autonomous agencies owe

\$6.5 million the Office of the Public Auditor, it was bared as the House of Representatives passed yesterday a bill ex-

empting the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and Northern Marianas College from the requirement to contribute 1 per-

cent of their budgets to OPA.

Data from OPA showed that OPA has failed to collect a total of \$6.5 million in contributions from autonomous agencies since 1996.

CUC owes the largest amount at \$3.95 million. The Commonwealth Ports Authority follows with a debt of \$1.3 million. The NMI Retirement Fund and the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission owe OPA nearly \$500,000 apiece. The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation is also behind in payments, owing nearly \$300,000.

The Commonwealth Development Authority is the only agency that is current in its payments to OPA. CDA settled its \$174,468

debt to OPA last fiscal year.

The failure of autonomous agencies to contribute to OPA means that OPA has been relying heavily on allotments from the central government, as well as federal aid, for funding.

House Bill 16-33, as passed by the Lower House, will make legal CUC's nonpayment of the OPA fee. The intent is to save CUC—and ultimately its customers—the \$1.17 million

that is due OPA.

The bill will also exempt NMC from the payment requirement, potentially saving the college some \$50,000 a year.

The bill passed with a 16-2 vote. Rep. Ray Yumul abstained, and Rep. Diego T. Benavente was absent.

Representatives Tina Sablan and Edward Salas voted against the legislation. Salas expressed concern that the bill might set a precedent for other autonomous agencies interested in a similar exemption and leave OPA with insufficient funding.



PRAYER VIGIL

Jerry Custodio, president of Human Dignity Movement, leads the press conference, together with activist Ron Hodges and other members, at the Beach Road pavilion Wednesday. The prayer vigil to express support for the federalization of the CNMI's immigration system will be held on April 5 at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater, from 5pm to 8pm.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

IMC blames MMC for alleged forgery

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Island Medical Center is accusing the Marianas Medical Clinic of allegedly forging at least 69 medical test requisitions to discredit IMC and to gain business upon the center's untimely suspension.

Dr. Tony Stearns of MMC has denied this.

In an earlier interview, IMC owner Antony Glad said all private clinics raised their food handler and health examination charges by \$10 to \$15 the day after his clinic was suspended and cited MMC of conspiring with other clinics to bring him down.

However, in a seven-page order prepared by administrative hearing officer Linn H. Asper, he said that IMC provided no evidence during the administrative hearing to support this allegation.

Stearns had also testified under oath that he has not conspired against IMC.

Asper stated in his report that testimonies given by IMC never made any sense.

"How did MMC obtain all the IMC health screening examination documents that ac-

companied the forged MTRs? Did MMC forge IMC's HSEs also, complete with patients' photograph and Dr. Christine Brown's stamp and signature? Or did MMC deliberately create two sets of MTRs to set IMC up for a false charge of forging documents? Such elaborate plots seem very unlikely," stated Asper.

He said that it is much easier to believe that IMC or someone within it had decided to forge MMC's documents in order to induce the Department of Public Health to release the health certificates that IMC's patients needed without having to pay MMC for the results.

Dr. Tony Stearns of MCC testified during an administrative hearing that IMC contacted his clinic to perform lab tests on medical samples provided by IMC.

He said his clinic would do it if the tests were either paid or prepaid before the release of the test results to IMC.

Glad mentioned that there was forgery but cannot say for sure who was doing it.

He suspects either his former operations manager Romeo Dolot, who departed Saipan the next day the clinic was called for suspension, or MMC.

KHS to hold Spring Dance at Club V

The Kagman High School National Honor Society chapter will be holding their Spring Dance at the Saipan Grand Hotel Club V this April 11 from 5:30pm to 9pm.

According to NHS president Alexis Cabrera, the event is not only open to the students of Kagman High but to all other high schools in the CNMI.

The Spring Dance event is intended to help raise funds for the NHS' end-of-the-year retreat "for the hard work and dedication of each and every member."

Cabrera said, "This event will also serve as an opportunity for all the members to come together and enjoy a night of dancing and fun."

She added that the NHS club

is "very fortunate that Tan Holdings Corp. is able to sponsor us so that we could have this event within our budget range. If it weren't for their assistance, then we would not have been able to host such an activity."

Tickets for the event are at \$5 each and are available through KHS Honor Society members.

A \$5 per ticket special deal will be given to those who can make it to the event between 5:30pm and 6:30pm.

"After that, tickets will be sold for \$7 each," Cabrera said.

KHS says they are "very excited" that the Spring Dance will be held at one Saipan's hot spots and encourages students from other high schools to join in the fun. (Rianne Pangelinan-Brown)

April SPECIALS

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Lack of flight activity imperils Tinian, Rota ILS

By **MARK RABAGO**
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Bad news for Rota and Tinian.

The Federal Aviation Administration said it would not install instrument landing systems on the two islands unless it becomes cost-beneficial for the agency to do so.

This, in a nutshell, was the explanation offered by FAA Western-Pacific regional administrator William C. Withycombe when asked why Tinian and Rota—unlike Saipan and Guam—have no ILS, which helps pilots land aircraft during rough weather and nighttime conditions when runway visibility is poor.

"It's all about how it's going to be funded and what benefits come from that particular operation. That's the key to it. If

there's a large demand that develops for the airport use, the FAA would fund that installation and put that system in place," said the FAA official during a break in yesterday's 2008 Pacific Aviation Directors Workshop at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

Withycombe said the ILS requests for both islands have been studied but until Tinian and Rota meet the cost benefit ratio that the FAA has take into account in order for airports to qualify, it cannot fund ILS installations on the two islands.

"Unless the operations increase to the numbers that qualifies them, the FAA cannot fund it."

He said that outside of qualifying under the cost-benefit ra-

tio criteria, the CNMI government could still have an ILS on Tinian and Rota if it is willing to fork out the money for its installation.

"We would, of course, give guidance and be a partner in installing the equipment if the Commonwealth could come up with the money to be able to afford the system. ILS runs a couple of millions of dollars at least—a substantial amount of money. The [Rota] airport itself has a brand new runway only a few years old.

"Obviously, an instrument landing system will bring benefits to the operation of the airports. It will also bring benefits to the Commonwealth. It's going to take money and a reim-



Withycombe

bursable type of agreement with FAA to do [maintenance]," said Withycombe.

ILS is a ground-based system with antennas that are installed on concrete pads near the end of the runway. Pilots use them for bad weather approaches or nighttime approaches to the

end of the runway so a pilot sees a signal in the cockpit that provides guidance to them in all-weather and all-night time conditions.

Withycombe said that ILS has been used for years and years in the aviation industry. Outside of Guam and Saipan, all other air-

ports—international or local—in Micronesia have no ILS.

The two islands immediately to the south of Saipan have long pinned for an ILS in their airports. Tinian, especially, since the island believes the system is the only ingredient missing for its casino industry to really take off. Aside from Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino, two other companies are constructing casino operations on the island.

Hocog replaces Torres as PUTC chair

Rota Rep. Victor B. Hocog was named yesterday to lead the House Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications.

House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios made the announcement after accepting the resignation of Rep. Stanley T. Torres as chairman of the committee.

"I am truly saddened to be losing your experience and expertise at the helm of such an

important committee," Palacios told Torres in a letter yesterday.

To Hocog, the speaker expressed his confidence that "under your leadership the committee will thoroughly and expediently evaluate the numerous legislative matters now before it and report to the full House."

Torres resigned as PUTC chairman last week because he felt the committee was pressured to

"rubberstamp" the appointment of Kimberlyn King Hinds to the utility regulatory board.

Torres, along with three other House members, had wanted Hinds to go through a public hearing. But the majority declined and went ahead with a vote. He also believed that Hinds' ties with a private water bottling company on Tinian meant a potential conflict of interest. (Agnes E. Donato)

'Lower pension contribution rate further'

By **AGNES E. DONATO**
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has asked the House of Representatives to bring the government retirement contribution rate further down to 11 percent, from the 18 percent enacted recently.

The rate adjustment is one of the financial measures recommended by the administration amid the Legislature's continued failure to pass an updated appropriation for the current fiscal year.

Fitial, with reservation, signed into law the 18-percent pension contribution rate in January 2008. He now wants the rate adjusted, as he had originally proposed, to 11 percent of the total government payroll, retroactively to the beginning of fiscal year 2008.

According to the Fund's actuary, CNMI government agencies must pay 36.7 percent of the payroll to sustain the pension program.

The governor is counting on the passage of a public borrowing proposal to restore the pension program's fiscal solvency.

"Upon passage of the legislative initiative to secure a pension obligation bond, the administration will move swiftly to retire the Fund's unfunded liability," Fitial told Speaker Arnold I. Palacios.

Two such initiatives are pending before the House. One of the initiatives, sponsored by Rep. Heinz Hofschneider, proposes to secure a \$200-million pension obligation bond, to prohibit additional benefits to members, and to gradually reduce the size of government. The other initiative, sponsored by Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero, will allow the CNMI government to borrow an amount equal to what it owes the Retirement Fund by the time the initiative is enacted.

To date, the government's debt to the Fund has reached approximately \$193 million.

The governor also requested

the House to endorse other budget provisions. Specifically, he asked the House to restore the so-called "austerity Friday holidays"—or government shutdown every non-payday Friday—and to suspend legal holiday pay.

The House was also asked to grant 100-percent reprogramming authority to the Executive Branch, and to allow the Governor's Office to transfer or reprogram any available funds outside of the General Fund for the operation of the central government.

Furthermore, Fitial urged the House to suspend certain earmarked funds to keep available revenue resources at the level set under the FY2007 budget (which the government is following in the absence of a new budget).

"As you well know, our Commonwealth is currently facing great financial challenges and these financial challenges cannot be properly addressed by the Executive Branch alone. The Executive Branch needs the support and assistance of the Legislature," the governor said.

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Gas prices reach \$5.32 per gallon in Fiji

SUVA, Fiji (FijiSUN/PIR)—The price of diesel is to go up by four cents today with consumers having to pay FJ\$1.82 [US\$1.22] per liter [US\$4.61 per gallon] of diesel. This followed an announcement yesterday by the Prices and Income Board. Apart from diesel, the retail and wholesale prices of motor spirit, pre mix outboard fuel and kerosene will also go up. This is a second increase for these petroleum products this month.

The new retail price of motor

spirit per liter now stands at FJ\$2.10 [US\$5.32 per gallon] compared [US\$ to the existing retail price of FJ\$2.07. Kerosene will now be sold at FJ\$1.54 per liter compared to the existing price of FJ\$1.51 and premix outboard fuel \$2.09 cents compared to the original price of FJ\$2.05 per litre. According to PIB, the increases were due to the excess demand over supply in the world market which pushed the prices of crude oil and product prices higher last month.

PIB also highlighted that the weakening US dollars cushioned the increase. According to PIB, the increases were due to the excess demand over supply in the world market, which pushed the prices of crude oil and product prices higher last month. PIB also highlighted that the weakening US dollars cushioned the increase. Largest oil company Total Fiji Limited welcomed the increase but was concerned with the escalating global oil prices. Company managing

director Vijay Kumar said the world market price of oil continued to escalate between US\$100 and US\$107 a barrel and the company had to find means to meet these prices in the international market. “The oil prices is not going to decrease below the US\$100 a barrel and it is a great concern because we have to buy oil from the international market,” said Mr. Kumar. “The US dollar has also weakened and this has also impacted the oil prices and anyone can predict that the world demand for oil increases, the prices of oil will continue to increase.” He said escalating oil prices cannot be sustained by oil companies but the effect would be felt greatly by the consumers. The increase in price of diesel is expected to result in increase in cost of boat freight and fares. Consort Shipping Line Limited

managing director Justin Smith said boat passengers would have to absorb the increase. “We cannot increase freight because it is regulated by PIB and the only choice we have is to charge more on the fares,” he said. With high demand in oil, Mr. Smith said, people would have to get use to paying more for products and services. The Fiji Taxi Union on the other hand expressed shock in the latest increase. FTU general secretary Rishi Ram said the weaker US dollar should pose a decrease in fuel prices this month. He is calling on PIB to give an explanation on reasons prices of fuel had not come down. “With the US dollar, the prices of crude oil had decrease but it is surprising that there was an increase, we want an explanation why this is so.” Retailers have been advised by PIB that their retail prices should reflect the stock they hold and the allowed profit mark-up that was calculated based on costs.

Solomons’ Malaita showing effects of rising sea

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (Solomon Times/PIR)—Minister for Environment, Conservation and Meteorology Gordon Darcy Lilo confirms that effects of global warming are now evident in Solomon Islands. Speaking in Parliament last week, Lilo said the effects include coastal erosion, inundation and salt water intrusion of Fanalei and Walande Islands in Malaita Province and the sinking of Hakupa Island in Ontong Java, also in Malaita Province. Lilo said climate change will affect Solomon Islands in five main areas. They are reduced Agriculture productivity and food security, water stress and water insecurity, Rising sea levels and exposure to climate di-

sasters, Ecosystems and bio-diversity and human health. He said climate change scenarios are pointing to losses in productivity of agriculture which may lead to acute malnutrition in the immediate future. Lilo informed Parliament that sea level rise has led to the shrinking of water table lens in Ontong Java and led to the brackishing of fresh water. He also informed Parliament that the increases in temperature would cause warmer seas that will fuel more violent tropical cyclones, displacement of people and inundation of small atoll and man-made islands. Lilo said climate change would increase the risk of malaria despite

repeated ‘Malaria Eradication Programmes’. Lilo said that because of these, government policies, strategies and programmes must take into account the threats of climate change on the people and the environment.

PSS

From Page 1

those buses are down, leaving only 11 to service all students under the system and forcing buses to make more trips back and forth since the past month. According to PSS bus team leader Steven M. Pangelinan, PSS spends an average of \$15,000 per month on diesel fuel for the buses alone. “This is just for Saipan alone and does not include Tinian and Rota, where we know that fuel is a lot more expensive,” Pangelinan said. PSS averages bus ridership of between 1,800 to 2,500 students per day. Pangelinan said that there could be more but because space and bus time on the road is very limited due to the recent massive shortage, students would rather have their parents bring them to and pick them up from school. The average capacity per bus is 60. “And because we can only have a maximum of 65 students in each bus per trip, these buses are making extra trips,” said Pangelinan. Since more stringent school bus regulations were implemented, Pangelinan said the students have been more respectful in taking care of the buses. “We still have our hot spots such as Hopwood Junior High, Marianas High School, and Saipan Southern High School. Other than that, other schools have been following procedures and regulations,” Pangelinan said. He emphasized that school bus rid-

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c. All riders are to cross the street only when the bus is stopped and red lights are flashing d. All riders are prohibited from pushing the door of the bus. e. All riders are to maintain at least four feet from the curb until the bus comes to a complete stop. f. There will be no pushing when boarding the bus. All bus riders must follow the rules and that their safety is a priority to our department. Failure to comply will result in the loss of your privileges to ride any Public School System school bus. Any questions or comments, please contact us at 322-9457/58. (PR)

CAR

From Page 1

association, automobile sales declined to 52 total unit sales last month from the 68 disposed of in the same period last year. The 52 units were made up of 33 cars, five trucks, two vans, and 12 sports utility vehicles. CADA secretary and Microl Corp. general manager Douglas Brennan is, however, unperturbed by the 23-percent decline in car sales. “The good news is were not going down. We’re still in the level from last year’s numbers so probably we’ve reached the bottom. We’re actually 4.4 percent ahead of last year,” he said in a telephone interview with the *Saipan Tribune* yesterday. Douglas pointed out that compared to last year’s January-March figures, CADA’s new vehicle sales are up by eight units during the first three months of 2008. The March report from CADA showed

that automobile sales in the first quarter of the current year have a total of 190 units, compared to 182 units sold during the same period in 2007. The 190 units CADA’s members—Microl Corp., Joeten Motors, and Triple J Motors—sold consist of 100 cars, 18 trucks, 18 vans, 48 SUVs, and six in the “others” category. Brennan, who was speaking in lieu of CADA president and Joeten Motors president Matt Deets, added that despite the down month in March, he thinks that the islands’ auto dealerships are finally close to seeing the end of the dark tunnel. “I hope this [slide] has leveled off and CADA maintains this level in six to eight months and I anticipate the economy would finally solidify as the military buildup in Guam goes full steam. That’s what were hoping for,” he said. Joeten Motors is the distributor for Nissan, Ford, Honda, and Kia. Microl Corp. sells Toyota and Chevrolet. Triple J Motors peddles Mazda, Hyundai, Mitsubishi, and Suzuki.

GAO

From Page 1

The Governor’s Office in a statement said it had received information that GAO submitted its final report to Congress on March 28, 2008. Citing a GAO source, the local government added that congressional staffers had asked GAO to keep the report from the public for 30 days unless the congressional staffers decide to release it at an earlier date. Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said of the development, “Preventing the public release of the GAO report for as long as 30 days means that the members of Congress will not be informed of the many serious legal shortcomings of the important bill they are being asked to

approve. We pointed many of these deficiencies in our comments to GAO.” The GAO report was requested by the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. On Feb. 22, 2008, GAO circulated its draft report, allowing the CNMI government and concerned federal agencies such as the departments of Homeland Security, Interior, and Labor to comment on the initial findings. It is GAO’s practice to include such comments in the final version of the report. According to the Fitial administration, one of the most controversial interpretations contained in the GAO draft report was its tentative view that the transition period defined under the bill could not be extended beyond Dec. 31, 2013. Howard Willens, the governor’s

special legal counsel who prepared the CNMI government’s comments on the draft report, said GAO’s interpretation is inconsistent with both the language of the bill and its legislative history. He said the U.S. Labor secretary is clearly given the authority to extend the transition period for periods of up to five years after considering a long list of relevant factors. Willens also disagreed with GAO’s purported view that nonimmigrant foreign workers under the H visa program during the transition period are exempted from the requirements of the CNMI-only permit system. He said the permitting system mandated by the bill applies to all nonimmigrant workers in the Commonwealth. Furthermore, Willens said that GAO, in preparing its economic analysis,

should consider different legal interpretations of the bill, particularly with regard to the transition period and the H visas. “We are not suggesting that GAO has an obligation to address each and every possible interpretation of the legislation advanced by one or more imaginative commentators. We believe that the two substantive issues addressed in this letter [CNMI government comments] provide examples of interpretations different from those advanced in the GAO draft report which might be the subject of separate economic analysis,” Willens said. He characterized the federalization bill currently pending in the U.S. Senate as “poorly drafted” because of its ambiguity, which lends itself to differing legal interpretations, and

because it grants the federal agencies that will execute it “excessively broad discretion” in how they will go about implementing the transition program for alien workers in the CNMI and the visa waiver program for Guam and the CNMI. “The Commonwealth has been assured that GAO intends to prepare a ‘neutral’ report based on the legislation, which we take to mean that the agency’s economic analysis will be presented on a purely factual basis and not reflect any bias regarding the need for, or the merits of, the legislation. Such an analysis should, in our opinion, look at some of the critical issues raised by the bill with a clear understanding of the relevant facts and the alternative consequences of different agency decision,” Willens said.

Bennett petition found constitutionally insufficient

The NMI Supreme Court was unable to clarify the proper procedure for selecting a teacher representative to the CNMI Board of Education as the petitioners requesting the court's assistance failed to meet constitutional requirements.

On Jan. 15, 2008, Roman C. Benavente, former BOE chairman, and Ambrose M. Bennett, former BOE teacher representative, petitioned the Supreme Court with seven questions regarding the process for selecting a teacher representative to the Board of Education.

On April 1, 2008 the Supreme Court, in a decision authored by Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan, stated that the

court was without authority to answer the questions, because Benavente and Bennett failed to satisfy the constitutional prerequisites for certifying legal questions to the court.

According to the justices, the Commonwealth Constitution mandates that four prerequisites must be satisfied before the Supreme Court may review certified legal questions.

First, the Constitution requires the existence of a dispute between Commonwealth officials. The court, however, determined there is no conflict or disagreement between Benavente and Bennett based on the information submitted. Although both petitioners alleged

disputes with at least three other parties, the court noted that none of those other parties petitioned the court. Also required is the demonstration that the dispute must be between or among Commonwealth officials, and although Benavente and Bennett were officials during their respective BOE terms, the other parties allegedly involved in the dispute are not Commonwealth officials.

Second, the dispute must relate to the Commonwealth officials' legal powers or responsibilities. The court determined that Benavente and Bennett failed to satisfy the second prerequisite, stating, "Under the Constitution, petitioners do not have the power to select a new teacher representative, as that power is vested in the exclusive bargaining representative of the PSS teachers."

Third, parties to the dispute must set forth the stipulated facts upon which the dispute arises. Although acknowledging the petitioners agreed to facts they submitted, the court goes on to state, "Benavente and Bennett are not opposing parties. Rather, they are on the same side of an alleged dispute and their interests are aligned." The petitioners were required to submit facts that are agreed to by the other parties involved in the dispute, but they failed to do so.

The fourth and final constitutional prerequisite is the submission of legal questions

arising from their dispute. However, the court did not discuss this final factor be-

cause Bennett and Benavente failed to satisfy the previous three. *(Supreme Court)*

99 Cents vows to fight lawsuit

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The owner of 99 Cents Supermarket denied that any harassment occurred at its Garapan store and vowed to fight the federal discrimination lawsuit filed against it by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

"99 Cents Supermarket denies that its managers or employees subjected Luzviminda S. Francisco to harassment or retaliation as claimed by the California-based EEOC in a lawsuit filed Monday in U.S. District Court. 99 Cents will vigorously defend [itself against] the lawsuit," reads a statement from 99 Cents owner Yong Yoon Hojin. In the lawsuit, the EEOC alleged that a store manager subjected female employees to sex harassment and that the employer retaliated against one employee by not renewing her work contract because she complained about the harassment.

The sex harassment allegedly included unwelcome touching when the store manager repeatedly slapped female employees on their buttocks either with his hand or with a textile tube.

The South Korean businessman, however, disputed the allegation and even defended the non-renewal of Francisco as following the letter of the law in hiring nonresident workers.

"99 Cents is an equal opportunity employer and lawfully gives preference for cashier positions to resident workers as required by CNMI law," he said.


In its filing, EEOC said that, although Yong and his associates received notice of the harassment, 99 Cents failed to take appropriate action to investigate and correct any sexual harassment. Instead, the complaining employee lost her job.

EEOC's Regional Attorney Anna Park said, "The EEOC is committed to protecting employees whose employers retaliate against them for exercising their rights against discrimination. All workers-local and non-resident-have the right to work in an environment free of daily

harassment and retaliation. We encourage victims of harassment and retaliation to step forward and notify the EEOC."

The EEOC filed the suit (EEOC v. 99 Cents Supermarket, Inc., et al, CV 08-0019) in U.S. District Court for the District of the Northern Mariana Islands, after first attempting a voluntary settlement.

EEOC seeks lost wages, compensation for emotional distress, punitive damages, and injunctive relief to prevent and correct any future workplace discrimination.



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Department of Public Health
Women, Infants and Children Program
Navy Hill Bldg N-25



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

On August 8, 2007 the Department of Public Health officially opened the Women, Infants and Children Program, better known as "WIC."

The WIC Program is 100% federally funded, and provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals for pregnant and new mothers, infants and children below the age of five (5).


The WIC Program's goals are to reduce nutrition related health problems, promote breastfeeding, prevent anemia, and help lower medical costs for low-income families in the CNMI.

WIC foods include iron-fortified infant formula and infant cereal, iron-fortified adult cereal, vitamin C-rich fruit or vegetable juice, eggs, milk, cheese, peanut butter, dried beans/peas, tuna fish and carrots. Special therapeutic infant formulas and medical foods may be provided when prescribed by a physician for a specified medical condition.

The Program would like to thank the community for its patience during the initial phase of operation, and would like to assure the residents of Rota and Tinian that plans are underway to bring services to these respective islands. More information will be provided when the proposed opening dates are confirmed.

Eligible participants must meet income guidelines, CNMI residency requirements, and be determined to be "nutritionally at risk" by a health professional.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 236-8750/58 or visit the WIC Clinic in the CHC Dialysis Center, north entrance.




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Miller: Immigration reform bill introduced today

By ANNA SCHECTER
ABC NEWS

Editor's Note: The following article was originally posted on April 1, 2008, on the ABC News website.

A bill to reform the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands immigration system will be introduced on the Senate floor today, addressing more than a decade of mounting concerns about the exploitation of

workers, sex trafficking and porous borders and years of political maneuvering by convicted lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

"After fighting for these reforms for many years, we are now closing the legal loopholes that had allowed some of the poorest men and women to be abused and exploited in sweatshops in this American territory," said Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., who has championed the fight for CNMI reform since the 1990s.

The bill would extend U.S. immigration laws to the CNMI and establish a federally administered guest worker program in the American territory.

Miller said the bill would crack down on illegal activity on the islands, largely due to corruption and the absence of border control.

CNMI Gov. Benigno R. Fitial strongly opposes the bill.

"We believe that self-government is an asset," said Fitial spokesman Charles Reyes.

Abramoff had for years lobbied on behalf of Saipan, and ABC News' Brian Ross reported some of the lavish trips that Abramoff provided for politicians, including DeLay, whom Abramoff took on a New Year's holiday to Saipan in 1997.

DeLay, his wife, daughter and several aides all stayed free at a beachfront resort. The trip was part of an effort by Abramoff to stop legislation aimed at cracking down of sweatshops in the American territory by applying

U.S. labor law to workers there.

Since Abramoff was convicted of fraud and DeLay was forced to leave Congress on charges of improper cam-

paign financing, legislation passed to raise the minimum wage of workers in the CNMI to match that of the United States' last year.



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Reunion meeting for Kueto clan

This is to inform the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Vicente Gogue Taitano and Juan Gogue Taitano that there will be a reunion meeting in preparation for the upcoming 2008 "Kueto Clan" Reunion.

The meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 9, 2008, at the residence of Gus and Oly Aldan in Chalan Kanoa District #2, at 6pm. Family members are urged to attend this important meeting.

For more information, contact Eleanor A. Cepeda at 483-5974. (PR)

MHS Class of '88 meeting

Members of the Marianas High School Class of 1988 will be a meeting again on Thursday, April 10, 2008, at the residence of Melvin and Eleanor Cepeda in As Lito, behind Saipan International School, at 6:30pm.

Reunion day is just around the corner. For this reason all classmates are encouraged to attend this important meeting.

For more information, contact Lillian Lizama Tudela at 287-3742 or Dennis Villagomez at 287-4689. (PR)

US Compact website now online

Nikolao Pula, acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Insular Affairs, said that a website dedicated to providing information on the Compacts of Free Association between the United States Government and the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia is now "live" and can be accessed at <http://www.uscompact.org>. Documents are still being uploaded and organized on the site. (OIA)

Hopwood upcoming events

April 4	Half-day schedule. Students will be dismissed at 12:30pm. Issuing of 3 rd Quarter report card will be from 2:30pm to 5:30pm
April 10	PTSA meeting at 6pm in the school cafeteria. Topic: Promotion and Accreditation
April 14-18	Testing days for the SAT 10. Students' attendance is important for these testing dates
May 4,5,6	Accreditation visit. Parent and community involvement is highly encouraged
May 19 - 20	8 th Grade Final Exams
May 28	8 th Grade Promotion Day (2:30pm-5:30pm)

SSHS 3Q report card issuance

To all parents/legal guardians of Saipan Southern High School students: The third quarter report card is scheduled to be released on Thursday, April 3, from 4pm to 7pm. Parents will pick up the report cards from the counseling office. (PR)

MHS Calendar of Events

April 21-25	SAT10 Tests
May 5-16	Advanced Placement Tests
May 12-16	Standards-Based Assessment Tests
May 26	No classes (Memorial Day)
May 31	MHS Commencement Ceremony
June 3	Fourth Quarter ends

OES PTSA meeting next week

The PTSA Officers of Oleai Elementary School would like to inform the parents and guardians of Oleai Elementary School that there will be a PTSA meeting next Tuesday, April 8, 2008, 6pm, in the school cafeteria. (PR)

Charter Day Committee extends deadline for vendors

The Northern Marianas College Charter Day Committee is inviting different agencies, businesses, clubs, and other civic organizations to participate in the upcoming Charter Day celebration. Organizations may purchase booth space for the following categories: food/drink, specialty drinks (e.g. coffee coolers or pearl shakes), games booths, and retail (arts and crafts, toys, etc). The deadline to submit applications for booth spaces has been extended to this Friday, April 4, 2008. The Charter Day Celebration will be held on April 11, 2008 at the As Terlaje Campus from 3pm. to 10pm.

Reserve booth space by paying the \$100 one-time fee (which covers the tents booth and access to 110v electricity outlets). Contact Queanna Sablan at 234-5498 ext. 1253 or email queannas@nmnet.edu if you have any questions. (NMC)

Chamber scholarship materials now online

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce's Educational Scholarship Fund information and application materials are now available on the Chamber's website, www.saipanchamber.com, as well as at the Chamber office in the Family Building on Garapan Street in Garapan.

Each year, the Saipan Cham-

ber of Commerce awards thousands of dollars in scholarships to deserving local high school students to assist in defraying the ever-increasing cost of post-secondary education. Funds for the scholarship are raised through the silent auction at the Chamber's annual Installation Dinner, through the annual Cor-

porate Challenge, and through other events during the year.

This year, the Chamber will award six \$1,500 scholarships to deserving Saipan high school seniors. Both public and private high school seniors are eligible, as are non-U.S. citizens. To download complete eligibility requirements and application materials,

visit the Chamber's website.

Applications are due at the Chamber office by 5pm, Friday, April 18, 2008 and scholarships will be awarded at the Chamber's general membership meeting on June 4, 2008. Questions may be directed to the Chamber at info@saipanchamber.com or 233-7150. (SCC)

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FMI finishes drainage cleanup project

For the second year in a row, the Friends of the Mariana Islands thanked Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc. for its support for the Environmental Drainage Cleanup Project. This year's project was at Tun Joaquin Doi Street and last Thursday Cecile Suda and Alex Brecia of Mobil were presented with the Performance and Financial Reports of the project, as well as a certificate of appreciation to Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc. by FMI president Marites A. Castillo.

The project was completed over nine weekends only because of the efforts of the FMI volunteers, in hopes of continuing support from Mobil.

Castillo also presented Suda with a proposal to continue with a new environmental project by cleaning the drainage areas of Isa Drive from the Airport Road intersection up to past San Vicente.

"Without the supplies and other support provided by



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Alex Brecia, supervisor, Saipan Mobil Oil Mariana Islands, Inc.; Marites A. Castillo, FMI president/chairwoman; Cecile B. Suda, public relations & government affairs manager, Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc.; and Isabel Amarille, FMI business manager)

the Mobil donation, the volunteers would not have been able to bring the environmental work on Tun Joaquin Doi Street to a successful conclu-

sion," said Castillo.

Other support for the project was given by Philippine Goods Construction owner, Danilo Villacruses, who do-

nated several days of backhoe support free of charge.

Through Carlyn Reyes Tenorio, PTI also donated hats to keep the sun off the Friends of the Mariana Islands volunteers. Also, Beautify CNMI donated trash bags to the project, FMI also acknowledged and thanked former lawmaker Jacinta Kaipat and her family, and Angelo Villagomez for their untiring support.

"DPS has really been very helpful with the project by providing us cones during our cleanup project. Special thanks to former Commissioner Rebecca Warfield and Officer Tony Macaranas for helping the FMI with the project," said Castillo.

The organization will continue with its activities in April, kicking off with a cleanup at the Garapan tourist district on April 6, 2008. This will be followed by cleanup from NMC to San Vicente Elementary School on April 13, 2008 and Lau-Lau Beach on April 20, 2008. (PR)

Guam Air Guard to hold flagging ceremony

The Guam Air National Guard's 254th Civil Engineer Squadron is scheduled to hold a Flagging Ceremony on Friday, April 4, at the 36th Wing Parade Ground, Andersen Air Force Base.

This ceremony represents the conversion of the 254 CES from the Primary Base Engineering Emergency Force (Prime BEEF) to the Rapid Engineering Deployable, Heavy Operational Repair Squadron, Engineer (RED HORSE) mission. This conversion will change the primary skill sets from an engineering sustainment to a small scale engineering construction force.

"This is definitely an exciting time for us and we are happy to carry on the flag for the youngest RED HORSE unit in the Air National Guard as we become an Associate unit with the oldest RED HORSE unit in the Air Force," said Maj. Audie Artero, commander, 254 CES. It is a perfect match, added Artero.

The unit will be an Associate unit with the Air Force's 554th RED HORSE at Andersen, with current plans to relocate to the Northwest Field. There will be no changes to the current chain-of-command at this time.

The Guam Air National Guard's 254 CES was federally redesignated from an engineering flight to a squadron on July 1, 1985. This Friday's event demonstrates the Air Guard's growth as its Civil Engineer Squadron converts into a RED HORSE squadron.

RED HORSE squadrons provide the Air Force with a highly mobile civil engineering response force to support contingency and special operations worldwide. They are self sufficient, mobile squadrons capable of rapid response and independent operations in remote, high-threat envi-

ronments worldwide. They provide heavy repair capability and construction support when requirements exceed normal base civil engineer capabilities and where Army engineer support is not readily available. They possess weapons, vehicles/equipment and vehicle maintenance, food service, supply and medical equipment.

Their major wartime responsibilities are to provide a highly mobile, rapidly deployable, civil engineering response force

that is self-sufficient to perform heavy damage repair required for recovery of critical Air Force facilities and utility systems, and aircraft launch and recovery. In addition, they accomplish engineer support for bed down of weapon systems required to initiate and sustain operations in an austere base environment, including remote hostile locations.

The primary RED HORSE task in peacetime is to train for contingency and wartime operations. They participate regularly

in joint chiefs of staff and major command exercises, military operations other than war, and humanitarian civic action programs. They perform training projects which assist base construction efforts while at the same time honing wartime skills.

Units possess special capabilities, such as water-well drilling, explosive demolition, quarry operations, concrete mobile operations, material testing, expedient facility erection, and concrete and asphalt paving. (PR)

Council of Pacific Arts meets in A. Samoa

NOUMEA, New Caledonia—The 21st meeting of the Council of Pacific Arts, which oversees preparations for the Festival of Pacific Arts, is being held in Pago Pago, American Samoa, from March 31 to April 2, 2008.

The meeting has been organized jointly by SPC's Human Development Programme and the Government of American Samoa and is the final opportunity for representatives of Pacific countries and territories to discuss preparations for the 10th Festival of Pacific Arts. The Festival is being held in American Samoa from July 20 to August 2, 2008, and is expected to attract over 2000 participants and thousands of visitors.

Delegates will be given the chance to visit festival venues and facilities including accommodation. They will also discuss the exhibition of various art forms and logistical issues such as visa and quarantine regulations, catering and transport.

Another important item on the meeting agenda is a presentation on intellectual property rights by Wend Wendland and Terri Janke from the Geneva-based World Intellectual Property Organization. Their presentation will focus

on the protection of Traditional Cultural Expressions and Traditional Knowledge, particularly in relation to arts festivals.

Another important issue is the future role of the Council of Pacific Arts. Delegates will also discuss current national and regional strategies for the advancement of culture.

Dr Elise Huffer, Secretariat of the Pacific Community's adviser for culture, says the meeting is particularly important as it is the first time the Council has met in nearly four years.

"In addition to giving countries the opportunity to review preparations for the upcoming Festival of Pacific Arts, this meeting will play an instrumental role in assessing the present status of culture in the region and in setting its future agenda," Huffer says.

For more information on the 10th Festival of Pacific Arts visit the official website at <http://pacartsas.com/>

The Council of Pacific Arts comprises the 22 Pacific Island countries and territories that are members of SPC, with the addition of Hawaii, Easter Island and Norfolk Island, and the founding members, Australia

and New Zealand.

Last August, the Executive Board of the Council of Pacific Arts, which reports to the full Council, met at SPC headquarters in Noumea for an initial round of discussions regarding festival preparations.

The Festival of Pacific Arts was first held in 1972. It is a two-week event held every four years that attracts around 2000 participants from 25 Pacific Island countries and territories as well as Australia and New Zealand. The festival showcases traditional and contemporary arts, including music, dance, theatre and film, literature, culinary arts, navigation and canoeing, and traditional healing arts. It plays an important role in the rediscovery and strengthening of traditional skills and knowledge and the evolution of Pacific Island identities. The festival also promotes unity by facilitating inter-regional communication.

The theme for the 10th Festival of Pacific Arts is "Su'iga'ula a le Atuvasa: Threading the Oceania 'Ula". The 'ula or necklace is an adornment representative of a celebration or festive occasion. (SPC)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

April 03, 2000

CDA delinquency rate up 2 percent

The Commonwealth Development Authority has recorded a two percent increase in delinquency rate, indicating a distressing growth in the number of remiss borrowers during the first three months of the year, Board Chair John S. Tenorio said. The two percent rise in the January-March loan payment delinquency brought to 15 percent the development authority's overdue collectibles. CDA reported a 13 percent delinquency rate by end-December 1999.

Officials urge NMI residents: 'Be counted'

The federal government deployed close to 300 enumerators and field supervisors throughout the Northern Marianas Saturday, marking the start of the CNMI-wide Census 2000 which is being carried out once every 10 years. Census 2000 Area Manager Sohale Samari said celebrity households including those of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio, Lt. Gov. Jesus R. Sablan, Bishop Thomas Camacho and Saipan Mayor Jose Sablan were the first to be enumerated.

Food for street names

How would you like the name of the streets where you live remind you of your favorite food on the island? Well, residents of Koblerville may just have to live with that when the federal highway fund is finally given to the CNMI for the street naming project. Some of the approved names are Empanada Lane, Ice Keki Road, Tamales Road, Kelaguen Drive, Bibinka Road, to name a few.

April 03, 2001

Govt chronicles slow but sure growth

Slight upsurge in the tourism industry and growing business confidence have given the Northern Marianas economy the extra push to reach the \$2-billion mark by end-December 2000. A report released by the Tenorio Administration indicated that Business Gross Revenues is likely to soar 1.6 percent, or amount to \$2.140 billion, for the end of the year 2000.

Tobacco fund to finance GHLI transfer

Initial funding capital of \$1 million from the Tobacco Master Settlement Fund and health premium will be used to finance operations of the proposed CNMI Health and Life Insurance Trust Fund Program. The proposed legislative measure is in response to earlier recommendations made by the Group Health Life Insurance Program to study possible transfer of GHLI Trust Fund to the purview of the Office of the Governor.

Borja: Lift ban on entry of tourists from China

The existing ban on the entry of Chinese tourists to the Commonwealth should be lifted to further boost the revenue-generating capability of the islands' travel industry. Tinian Mayor Francisco Borja urged the Legislature and Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio to establish a procedure acceptable to the Department of Labor and Immigration, in processing entry of Chinese visitors to enhance economic potentials of the CNMI.

April 03, 2002

San Antonio school vandalized

The staff and faculty of San Antonio Elementary School are spending what's left of the spring break cleaning up an enormous mess caused by unidentified suspects on majority of the public campus' classrooms. Tobet Smith, the school's acting principal, said yesterday they are trying to restore the classrooms and salvage school appliances which were trashed by unknown trespassers over the Holy weekend.

US Marines leave Tinian; Guam's National Guard to replace them

The U.S. Marines stationed on Tinian have begun leaving the island, after the conclusion of the recent Millennium Edge military exercises, with the first batch taking off Monday last week and the last batch set to leave on April 8. According to Tinian Rep. Norman S. Palacios, the U.S. Marines begun leaving the island in batches since March 25. "All the soldiers are leaving and I understand that their last day will be on April 8. After that, though, a new batch will be coming in and I think even Guam's National Guard are also going to come in, about 200 of them," said Palacios yesterday.

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Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR

Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

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EDITORIAL

Know your enemy

In the painful years since 9/11, President Bush has sought to provide Americans with a morally coherent narrative to explain our two long wars and other costly foreign involvements. And although the probity of the Iraq war has been widely debated, most Americans have agreed that we must fight radical Islamist movements that use terror and seek to humiliate and defeat the United States. Many have grudgingly accepted the five-year-plus U.S. military operation in Iraq because the president told them we had to keep foreign al-Qaida fighters and meddling Iranians from destabilizing the elected Iraqi government.

Iraq's problems were never so black-and-white, but Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's disastrous attempt to strike at lawless Basra has made them even grayer. For starters, the "criminal elements" in Basra are sworn enemies of al-Qaida. All of the Shiite factions in Iraq are receiving money, political support and probably weapons from Tehran, which unlike Washington is smart enough to hedge its Shiite bets. The latest speculation is that al-Maliki realized that Iranian influence in Basra had gone too far and decided to crack down on both the Mahdi Army, whose leader, Muqtada al-Sadr, had declared a cease-fire, and the other Iranian-backed militias that had continued to attack Iraqi and U.S. forces. Why Maliki made this sudden decision two weeks after feting Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Baghdad is unclear.

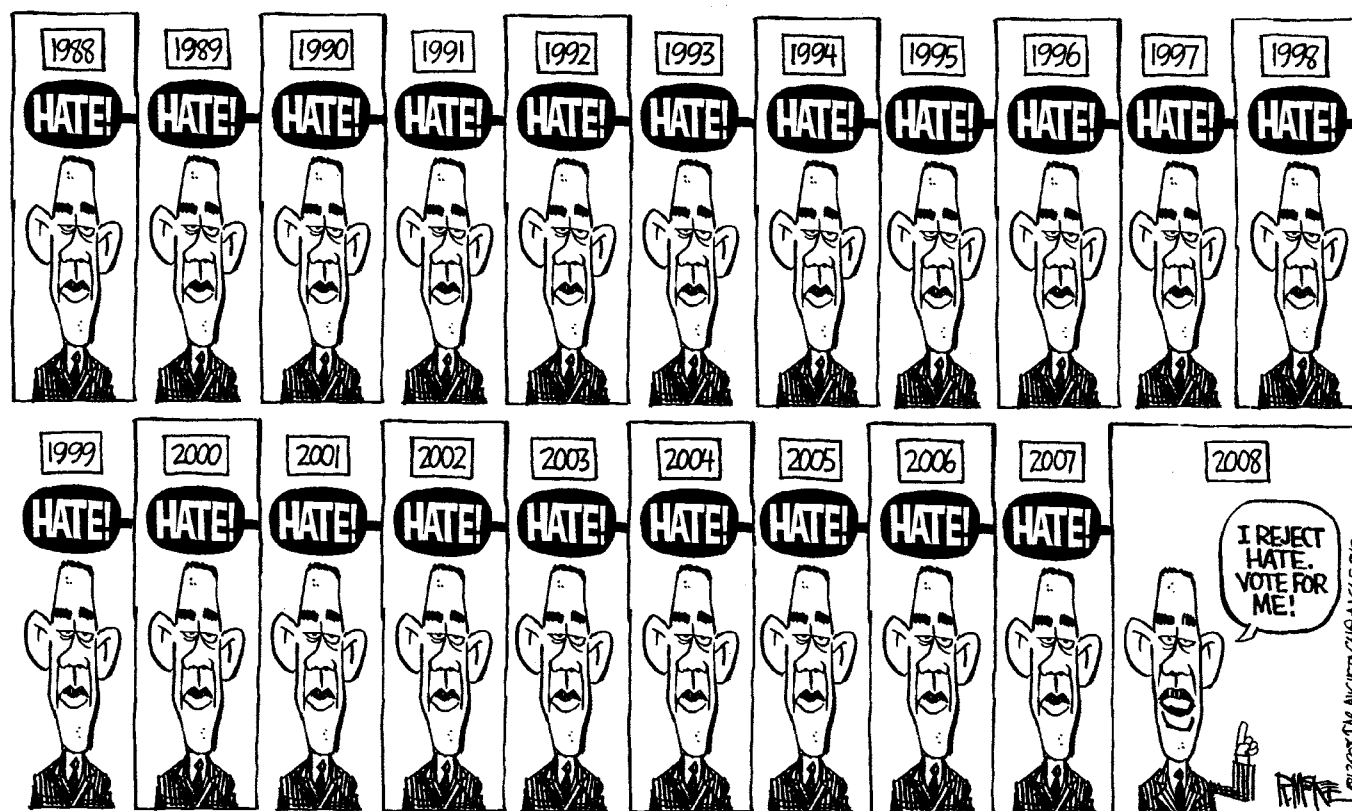
It's beyond dispute that some of the Shiite forces controlling Iraq's southern oil center, in particular its vital port, were indeed Iranian-backed and corrupt. Some ran death squads and kidnapping rings. (Of course, some of the same charges can be leveled against members of al-Maliki's government.) U.S. officials agreed that eventually the port would have to be brought under government control. Whether this ill-planned, seemingly impulsive decision to resort to force was the only way to accomplish that goal is another matter.

Al-Sadr's forces say al-Maliki merely wants to wipe out his powerful Shiite rivals ahead of the key provincial elections slated for October—and is using the Americans to help him. Yet there is a real danger that the unpopular Maliki may instead generate a sympathy vote for the anti-American al-Sadr. Because the British failed spectacularly to bring law and order to Basra and the U.S. has poor intelligence there, Washington may have difficulty sizing up the situation for some time to come. Meanwhile, whether or not the U.S. military was sandbagged into providing extensive backup for this dubious Iraqi military operation, Bush would be unwise to let al-Maliki believe that U.S. support remains unconditional. And when will U.S. officials, starting with the president, stop labeling as "terrorists" everyone who opposes the al-Maliki government, which Washington well knows to be corrupt, sectarian and incompetent?

The U.S. military finally made progress in Anbar province when it stopped demonizing its opponents and started identifying those with common political interests. Wouldn't that be a wiser approach for Basra?

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BARACK OBAMA RESPONDS TO REV. JEREMIAH WRIGHT'S SERMONS



Learning as a team

"Team learning is the process of aligning and developing the capability of a team to create the results its members truly desire."
— Peter Senge

In his book, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, Peter Senge stresses the importance of learning and growth in organizations. He believes that team learning is the fifth discipline, and it is just as critical in business as it is in sports, science, and the performing arts.

When people learn together, synergy occurs and the collective intelligence of the team exceeds the intelligence of the individuals in the team, which in turn creates an extraordinary capacity for coordinated actions.

Learning as a team isn't as simple as putting staff together in a room and providing instruction. It requires people to "dialogue," or to suspend assumptions and discover insights that would not be possible individually. Senge believes that teams are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations, and unless teams learn, the organization cannot learn.

Learning and growth as a team and an organization was recognized by Robert Kaplan and David Norton as a critical measure in their book, *The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy Into Action*. They believe that the ability to meet ambitious financial targets depends on the organizational capabilities for learning and growth, and that strategies for superior performance generally require significant investments in the people, systems, and processes that build organizational capabilities. What this means, then, is that there should be additional objectives and measures created — thus a more balanced scorecard. After all, if you can't measure it, you can't manage it.

Now this sounds good in theory, but in practice, training and learning program budgets are the first to be slashed when sales drop or there is talk of a recession. It takes a leap of faith for a business owner in the CNMI to make an "investment" in their people when it's difficult to even meet payroll.

Accenture, a consulting firm, was going through a huge business change in a down economy, which caused them to temporarily lessen their commitment to provide quality training and development opportunities to their workforce. Prior to October 2000, the company was known as Anderson Consulting, but as part of a historic international arbitration decision, the company was required to sever all ties between Anderson Consulting.

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.



In response to these changes Accenture's Capability Development team leader, Donald Vanthournout, began a process to lead the company toward high performance through learning, knowledge management, and the transformation of its workforce. They were able to answer the question: "How can we best tap the collective intelligence of our people and engage them in their work?"

On a budget that was cut in half, Vanthournout and his team were able to link human capital investments to business benefits, align training with business strategy, and put into place the governance and leadership structures that would eventually increase their learning program's chance for success, and create what the team characterized as "phenomenal" learning experiences.

What was the bottom line? As a result of working closely with senior management, each dollar that Accenture spent on learning was returned, plus an additional \$3.25 in measurable value to its bottom line—in other words, a 325 percent Return on Investment.

Our point is this: many organizations are financially strapped as a result of the CNMI's dwindling economy. Reducing your commitment to develop your staff will only exacerbate an already intolerable situation. It may take a leap of faith to proactively spend the time and money to develop your team of people, but the other alternative is to reactively play the waiting game and hope things get better in the foreseeable future.

Reactive or proactive? Stagnate or growing? Those organizations that continue to exhibit a learning disability in our economy will be lucky to survive. Those companies that adopt the learning mindset as a team will continually expand their capacity to create their ideal future. For learning organizations, it is not enough to just survive because their focus is on thriving. As you tap into the collective intelligence of your team, you will find solutions that your business can implement to produce better performance.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Letters to the Editor**Medicare**

There have been at least four references in the papers over the last two days regarding “Medicare” in articles or other letters to the editor. It seems that there is some confusion about the third largest monetary expenditure of the Federal government (after the military and social security).

Supposedly, when a patient arrives at any public health care facility and asks for medical care, and is eligible for Medicare or Medicaid, he or she must receive care. Then the facility bills the cost of that care to the Federal Medicare or Medicaid disbursement office for payment.

Problem is, in the CNMI (and some other U.S. territories), it doesn’t work that way. Federal authorities DO NOT pay these monies directly to the facilities that bill them as they do in the U.S. Instead, there is a local office, under the Governor, that acts as a “clearing house” for all federal Medicare/Medicaid benefits. They, and they alone, receive all federal benefits as a “lump-sum appropriation” and pay them out to facilities. When the “appropriation” runs out, there just isn’t any more ‘til next year.

I don’t have last year’s figures, but the year

before, this office received around \$8 million in federal health payments—and it has been that way for many years. Now, that’s quite a good chunk of money and my question at the time was: “Why haven’t the Tinian or Rota medical facilities received even a single dollar of these payments after billing the office (for Medicaid patients) nearly \$700,000 over the last five years or so?” This has placed tremendous burdens on the local Mayor’s offices on those two islands alone just to keep those “clinics” running and resulted in a “receivables” account that is sinking the economy of those islands.

Well, I found out, in speaking with the federal people at their office in San Francisco, that (in the CNMI) it is entirely up to the local office, under the Governor’s control, to send that federal money to whatever medical facility they wanted to—and with practically NO oversight.

Then I spoke with personnel at the local office to find out where the monies went. Well, it seems that the local Medicare/Medicaid billing from all facilities within the CNMI was actually larger than the federal disbursement, but that didn’t explain why it

appeared that no one in the CNMI (including CHC) received ANY of that money.

The reason, it was disclosed, is that ALL of the money was used to pay outstanding bills from referral facilities off island because all those bills were even bigger than the local ones and bigger than the federal appropriation! This was apparently done under pressure from the off-island facilities to pay up or face refusal to accept referrals from the CNMI—and this included Hawaii, West Coast and the Philippine facilities.

Of course, the end result is the complete decline of the local health care system due in part to this payment fiasco and a lot of other factors as so eloquently pointed out by other authors. This is only a brief, simplified overview of what is occurring locally—but something must be done to rescue the collapsing health care system in the CNMI. The local government, it seems, simply cannot do the job as has been proven time after time, from health care to power.

Good luck.

Dr. Thomas D. Arkle Jr.
Tinian

Thank you

On behalf of my wife, Debbie Manglona Diaz, I and my kids would like to extend a heartfelt *un dankulu na si yuus maase* for the overwhelming support that our families, relatives, friends, former colleagues, and the general public had generously contributed during my wife’s fundraising event. Their generosity, especially in these times of economic hardship, will forever remain in our hearts.

We are extremely thankful for all the hard work and tremendous sacrifices that our immediate family, both Diaz and Manglona, had unselfishly committed. My in-laws (Benjamin T. Manglona and family) from Rota all traveled to Saipan to prepare, and without a doubt, unconditionally exerted all their energy and efforts into materializing such an exhaustive undertaking. For this, we are deeply touched and grateful. We are indebted to all of them, and at this time, have only our prayers to reciprocate for all their kindness and love.

In closing, my kids and I humbly ask for the community’s continued prayers for the restoration of my wife’s health. May God bless all of you.

Anthony Duenas Diaz
Dane Anthony Diaz
Benjamin Francisco Diaz
Daysha Lane Diaz
Dallas, Texas

Broken promises

It is sad to write this down but I guess I have no choice but to express my concern over some issues on our Rota leaders. Last year, prior to the midterm election, during their so-called wonderful speeches, promises came up, as they were heard saying I promise you this, that and many more. The thing that bothered me most was when they promised that if they get elected, “Bai en tupa I lamasa” (we’re going to turn the tables upside down) at the Legislature. The only turned table I see is our tables down here on Rota and the ones doing the flipping is, guess who, our very own Rota delegates.

What happened to that promise? Let me

guess. Maybe they are waiting until next year because general election is just around the corner and that’s another promise they’ll be adding to their platform. Promise you this, that and same old promises. Some of them will be seeking re-election or will probably run for Mayor.

This is a promise though: The people of Rota will not tolerate it any longer. Especially not in these very difficult and unstable economic times. The people of Rota are too busy trying to make ends meet, barely surviving on salaries that are just too low and fuel prices that are way too high; not to mention food and other items priced so high that when you go to any of the stores you

have to think twice which is most essential for your home.

I truly understand that it is not entirely their fault that we are in this predicament; however, it is their duty and responsibility to protect and find doable solutions to assist their people. Isn’t it a wonder why a lot of our people are leaving the island because our “highly respected” leaders are not doing what they are sworn in to do. These are drastic times and they call for drastic measures. Help us! The people are crying out for your attention and action.

Damian Toves
SongSong Village, Rota

Taotao Tano supports idea of national park

Taotao Tano has seen the proposal for a “National Park of the Sea” from the Pew Environmental Group and we support this idea. We are not ready to give the project a yes or a no just yet, but we like the idea and would like to discuss this idea further with federal and local officials.

The “National Park of the Sea” would create local jobs, lead to more science, education and research opportunities, and result in a visitor center highlighting our local cultures, volcanoes, coral reefs, and the Mariana Trench. It would also garner worldwide attention, giving our tourism industry a much needed boost.

It is our understanding that under this proposal no commercial or sport fishing would be allowed. Additionally, with increased enforcement, it would be more difficult for illegal foreign fishing vessels to fish in our waters. Furthermore, the proposal as currently written would allow indigenous cultural fishing.

Some have asked the question, “What if sometime in the future we find something of value that can be extracted from this area?” Taotao Tano’s position is that anything found up there should remain up there. The federal and the local government should not be allowed to exploit it.

If there is anything of value up there, it should benefit the NMI people, not the local government.

We urge the governor and the Legislature to consider this proposal. Please consider the people and the benefits of a globally recognized marine park.

Let’s stop the mentality of a flat-out NO or YES, but rather let’s talk. Let’s find our more. This is too good an opportunity for our government to dismiss without knowing more.

Gregorio Cruz
President, Taotao Tano

Roses and thorns: Smoking ban in public places

Roses to Rep. Justo S. Quitugua for his courage and concern to sponsor House Bill 16-47. The bill seeks to outlaw smoking in restaurants, bars and workplaces.

Roses to HANMI [Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands] for its support for the bill.

Roses to such places as ARC [Aqua Resort Club] for having banned smoking in its main dining room since April 1, 2007, despite being known as a place noted for catering to heavy-smoking Japanese tourists!

Roses to a very small number of locally run restaurants now willing and daring to pursue a similar ban.

Thorns to our current Governor and his Administration for continued foot-dragging and refusal to lead the way in banning smoking in public places. Shame on you, Mr. Governor!

Thorns to employers unwilling to promote smoking bans, thereby showing utter disregard for the health and safety of their employees and their patrons.

I am a two-time cancer survivor.

Smokers have the right to ruin their own health with tobacco. But they have no right to inflict secondhand smoking harm to their family, friends and we the general public.

I invite others to join in boycotting any restaurant unwilling to go “Smoke Free.” If useful, I further invite others to join in picketing places unwilling to ban smoking in public areas.

Bud Carroll
Capital Hill

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

I am originally from the island of Rota and currently in Orlando, FL and I make it a habit to check the news online everyday. Lately, I’ve been reading a lot of mind-boggling news about our lawmakers. I was debating if I should take time out to say something about it. The saying “a shut mouth does not get fed” goes far with me. So with that said, here it is.

I am taken back and confused as to why some of our leaders are being frivolous. The choice of words that some lawmakers choose to use are childish and theatrical. I am very disappointed. I’m a youth and to observe, read, and experience the older generation acting like some of my co-workers’ children is discouraging. I was raised with respect and vibe with people who have it. Aside from respect being a “simple” quality, it is part of the Chamorro culture.

Unfortunately, it is now that I see some of our leaders losing this quality. “I can lead a horse to water but I can’t make it drink”. I can express to lawmakers about how professionalism requires respect, how positivity moves production, and how teamwork exhibits extraordinary outcome but in the end of it all, my question is, do they have the WILL? As a voter and a native of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, I have expectations for our chosen leaders. If I helped put them in their current seat, the least I should have in return is their dedication to positively work for the common good of the people of the CNMI and show some RESULTS! With all the respect I have in me,

Valeen Mendiola Hocog
Orlando, FL

An invitation to all

The Human Dignity Movement, Saipan, CNMI will be leading a prayer vigil in support of federalization on Saturday, April 5, 2008 at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater, 5pm to 8pm.

We are inviting all guest workers—Filipinos, Chinese, Bangladeshi, Nepalese, Korean, Japanese, Canadian, Sri Lankan, and others; concerned locals; American citizens; business owners; and others to come support this memorable event. We will be offering inspiration and hope through prayers, and speakers.






Our struggle for justice, social and political rights, and due process has long been a long one. We hope we are nearing the end! Please come and demonstrate your support and unity! Your presence will be appreciated. “Kung hindi tayo kikilos, aino ang kikilos? Kung hindi ngayon, kailan pa! (If we do not act, who will? If not now, when?) If possible, please wear white t-shirts to symbolize your support and our unity. Please bring your U.S. citizen children with you. Thank you!

Jerry Custodio
President, Human Dignity Movement

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
				
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲82° ▼76°	▲83° ▼76°	▲82° ▼75°	▲83° ▼75°	▲82° ▼76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Sunny	▲85 ▼76
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86 ▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲86 ▼77
Chuuk	Partly Sunny	▲89 ▼79
Pohnpei	Mostly Sunny	▲86 ▼74
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲88 ▼75
Majuro	Showers	▲84 ▼74

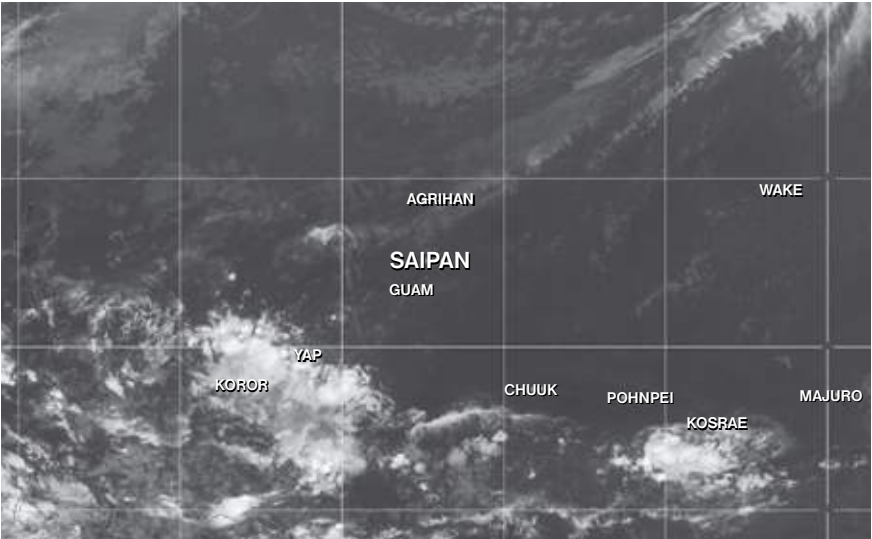
Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲69 ▼56
Beijing	Sunny	▲63 ▼42
Hong Kong	Showers	▲73 ▼70
Honolulu	Cloudy	▲77 ▼67
London	Partly Sunny	▲57 ▼46
Los Angeles	Partly Sunny	▲69 ▼52
Manila	Thundershowers	▲89 ▼76
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲58 ▼47
Miami	Thundershowers	▲84 ▼73
New York	Cloudy	▲52 ▼42
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲56 ▼41
Paris	Partly Sunny	▲56 ▼41
Pusan	Sunny	▲58 ▼38
Rome	Thundershowers	▲65 ▼39
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲61 ▼34
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲66 ▼50
Seoul	Sunny	▲55 ▼32
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲61 ▼44
Washington, DC	Showers	▲48 ▼44

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
6:05AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
12:02PM Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet
5:24PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weakening cold front extends from 25N159E to 20N152E and continues as a shear line past 14N130E. Scattered showers are occurring along and up to 200 miles northwest of the cold front and up to about 100 miles behind the shearline. A near-equatorial trough south of Koror and Yap stretches from 2N130E to a circulation centered near 3N138E. A surface trough located between Koror and Yap runs from 11N134E to the same circulation centered near 3N138E. Convergent winds associated with the troughs are generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms within 100 miles of a line that extends from 11N133E to 7N141E and in another area between 137E and 140E from 4N to 1N. These areas are adjacent to Koror and Yap. Trade-wind convergence south of Pohnpei and Kosrae is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms between 1N and 4N from 159E to 163E. Low-level convergent winds are producing scattered showers east of Majuro between 3N and 9N east of 173E to beyond 180.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:11AM	6:30PM
Friday	6:10AM	6:30PM
Saturday	6:10AM	6:30PM
Sunday	6:09AM	6:30PM
Monday	6:08AM	6:30PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:46AM	3:45PM
Friday	4:27AM	4:40PM
Saturday	5:07AM	5:36PM
Sunday	5:49AM	6:35PM
Monday	6:33AM	7:37PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- **ISLAND SNAPSHOTS**
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- **BUSINESS**
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- **SAMUT SARI**
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- **TRAVELOGUE**
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 27, 2008

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
Saipan-Rota CO 9313 8:30am 9:05am 3,4,7	Rota-Saipan CO 9598 11:10am 11:45am 1,2,6
Saipan-Guam CO9317 4:00am 4:50am Daily CO9597 8:30am 9:20am 1,2,5,6 CO9313 8:30am 10:00am 3,4,7 via Rota CO9601 12:30pm 1:20pm Daily CO9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily CO9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily CO9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily	Guam-Saipan CO 9316 2:30am 3:20am Daily CO9596 7:00am 7:50am Daily CO9598 10:15am 11:45am 1,2,6 via Rota CO9600 10:45am 11:35am 3,4,5,7 CO9602 2:00pm 2:50pm Daily CO9604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily CO9606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita NW 078 8:25am 1:30pm Daily via Nagoya NW 075 4:50pm 7:30pm Daily	Narita-Saipan NW 076 10:35am 3:05pm Daily NW 077 6:15pm 1:10am+1 Daily via Nagoya
Saipan-Osaka NW 083 4:20pm 7:10pm Daily	Osaka-Saipan NW 084 10:30am 3:05pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya NW 078 8:40am 11:25am Daily	Nagoya-Saipan NW 077 9:00pm 1:25am+1 Daily
Saipan-Manila CO 895 4:45pm 6:35pm 6 CO 895 6:45pm 8:35pm 3	Manila-Saipan CO 890 9:15am 2:55pm 6 CO 890 11:45am 5:35pm 3
Saipan-Seoul OZ 604 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ 604 2:40am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7 OZ 606 3:30pm 7:00pm 2,4,6,7	Seoul-Saipan OZ 605 9:00am 2:30pm 2,4,6,7 OZ 603 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ 603 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan OZ 608 4:00am 7:35am 1,4,5,7	Busan-Saipan OZ 607 9:30pm 2:50am+1 3,4,6,7
Guam-Manila CO 891 6:00am 10:30am 3 via Yap and Koror CO 893 6:30am 8:05am 6 CO 893 8:25am 10:00am 2,7 CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 5 via Koror CO 933 7:00pm 8:40pm Daily PR 111 6:00am 7:45am 1,2,4,6,7	Manila-Guam CO 894 11:20am 4:55pm 2,7 CO 894 7:45pm 1:20am+1 6 CO 892 9:45pm 6:30am+1 3 via Koror and Yap CO 892 10:10pm 5:30am+1 5 via Koror CO 934 10:55pm 4:30am+1 Daily PR 110 10:15pm 4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Guam-Hongkong CO 909 6:50pm 9:35pm 1,5	Hongkong-Guam CO 910 10:35pm 5:15am+1 1,5
Guam-Rota CO 9598 10:15am 10:45am 1,2,6	Rota-Guam CO 9313 9:30am 10:00am 3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily	FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily	FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily	Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
Guam-Rota				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily	FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily	FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily	FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily	FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily	FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily	FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily	FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily				
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Pacsports wins Club Car award

TAMUNING, Guam—Pacsports, Ltd., a distributor of golf-related equipment and apparel on Guam, Micronesia and the Philippines, was recently awarded the “Superior Distributorship Development Award” at the 2008 Club Car International Distributorship Meeting held in Greensboro, Georgia.

Pacsports is the official distributor of Club Car Inc., a world-renowned golf and utility transportation manufacturer.

According to general manager Frank Arriola, Pacsports earned the distinguished award for its Top Performance, championing over larger, volume driven markets, such as China, Korea, Australia, Taiwan and Japan. The company has a proven record for providing quality customer service, consistent

growth of market share and competitive drive above neighboring distribution territories.

“We feel honored to be a recipient of this award, especially having had the distributorship for just six years. I would like to recognize our customers and our entire team for their invaluable commitment and contribution, which made achieving this award well worthwhile,” said Arriola.

Pacsports plans to expand its

existing Club Car line in the Philippines while developing more “greener” (environment friendly) products, like its Low Speed Vehicles. LSVs will be the alternative to gasoline power engines, having the ability to be driven both, off and on any roadway at a cost effective price.

Pacsports, Ltd. is a distributor of golf-related equipment and apparel, established on Guam since 1988. (*Pacsports*)



On hand to receive the award were, left to right, Ruel Dalmacio (Philippines), Sales manager; Benji Magsino (Philippines), general manager; Frank P. Arriola (Guam), general manager, oversees Guam and the Philippines; Joseph L. Cruz (Guam), president; Gary Michel, Club Car Inc. president/CEO; Lino Bondoc (Philippines), president; and Pete Delgado (Guam), Sales and Operations manager, Club Car certified service representative (Guam and the Philippines).

CRIME OF THE WEEK

Burglary and theft incident

Crime Stoppers is asking the community for more information on any person(s) responsible for the burglary and theft incident at Grand Market locat-

ed in Puerto Rico. Based on preliminary investigation, the incident was reported on Monday, March 31, 2008 at 6:13 a.m. The perpetrator(s) managed to steal a pair of sunglasses, several boxes of cigarettes, a pair of blue quick dry short pants, and an undetermined amount of money.

Anyone having information about this crime, please call the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272. Crime Stoppers pays cash rewards up to \$1,000 for information leading to an arrest. Caller ID is not used. All calls remain anonymous. (*Crime Stoppers*)



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Office of the Secretary of Public Works

2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Gualo Rai
Saipan, MP 96950



INVITATION FOR BIDS DPW08-IFB-018

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF TRAFFIC SIGNAL LED LAMPS AND PEDESTRIAN SIGNAL LED LAMPS

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for the Supply and Delivery of Traffic Signal LED Lamps and Pedestrian Signal LED Lamps, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after April 3, 2008 at DPW Technical Services Division, 2nd Floor-Commercial Building, Oleai Center, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of Twenty Five Dollars (**US\$25.00**) is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division. All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001.

There will be a Pre-bid Conference for this project on April 21, 2008, 9:00 a.m. local time at the DPW Conference Room in Gualo Rai above Pizza Hut, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on April 24, 2008 to **Mr. Joseph M. Inos Jr., Director** of Technical Services Division, DPW 2nd Floor Commercial Building, Oleai Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547.

Sealed bids must be marked **“DPW08-IFB-018”**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 10:00 a.m. local time May 2, 2008. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. local time May 2, 2008, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than May 2, 2008, and must be received no later than May 13, 2008. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. local time, May 16, 2008. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 10:00 a.m. local time, on May 7, 2008.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (**\$25,000.00**) a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. This security may be Certified Check, Cashier's Check or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: “Credit Account No. 44660”.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000.00. The surety company providing the Performance and payment bonds must be authorized to conduct business in CNMI and possess unencumbered assets equal to the penal amount of each bond.

Performance time for completion of this project is sixty (60) calendar days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed at one hundred dollars (**US\$100.00**) per calendar day for delays beyond the established completion date.

This project is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. Contract award is contingent upon funding approval by the authorized funding agency.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not effect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/ DIEGO B. SONGSONG
Acting Secretary of Public Works

/s/ THELMA B. INOS
Director, Energy Division

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, Procurement & Supply



Saipan Tribune, the CNMI's first daily newspaper, is looking for fresh talent to join our team.

REPORTER

- At least two years' experience writing for a newspaper or magazine;
- Must know how to write hard news, features, and business stories;
- Must have competent grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax;
- College graduate (Journalism, Communication, Creative Writing, English majors a plus)
- Must be methodical, analytical, detail-oriented, and can work fast within strict deadlines;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, aggressive, and a team player;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Computer literate and with driver's license.

SPORTS REPORTER

- At least two years' experience covering sports for a newspaper or magazine;
- Must have competent grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax;
- College graduate (Journalism, Communication, Creative Writing, English majors a plus)
- Must be methodical, detail-oriented, and can work fast within strict deadlines;
- Must be willing to put in flexible work hours;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, aggressive, and a team player;
- Computer literate and with driver's license;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be passionate about sports.

ART DIRECTOR

- At least five years' experience in the publishing industry or related field;
- Must have at least two years' supervisory experience in the field;
- High proficiency in Adobe CS applications (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop); knowledge of other applications for print and web a plus;
- Deep familiarity with Mac environment; knowledge in PC is a plus;
- College graduate (Fine Arts, Graphic Design or related course);
- Must have extensive knowledge in digital pre-press production and printing;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be creative, resourceful, and can work fast.

GRAPHIC ARTIST

- At least three years' experience in the publishing business or related field;
- High proficiency in Adobe CS applications (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop); knowledge of other applications for print and web a plus;
- Deep familiarity with Mac environment; knowledge in PC is a plus;
- College graduate (Fine Arts, Graphic Design or related course);
- Must have basic knowledge in digital pre-press production and printing;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be creative, resourceful, and can work fast.

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

- At least high school graduate;
- Typing speed of at least 40 words per minute
- Must have extensive experience using Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint);
- Must be familiar with Mac computers (knowledge in PC is a plus);
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, and a team player.

If you think you have what it takes to be part of this dynamic team, submit your most recent résumé and portfolio to the *Saipan Tribune*, located on the second floor of the CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan. Or e-mail it to editor@saipantribune.com. On-island hires preferred.

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Island Snapshots



AUTISM PROCLAMATION

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signs the proclamation declaring April as Autism Month in the CNMI at the governor's conference room on Capital Hill Thursday last week.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION MONTH

Jode Reyes 6, and Peter Camacho 7, display campaign materials during the proclamation signing ceremony designating April as the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month in the CNMI at the Governor's office on Capital Hill Monday. The event aims to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect and encourage individuals and communities to support children and families.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



HOLE-IN-ONE CAR PRIZE

Triple J Motors has offered a Mazda automobile as a hole-in-one prize for the NMC Foundation's fundraising golf tournament, which will be held April 26, 2008, at the Lao Lao Bay Golf Resort. Picture shows, from left, Northern Marianas College president Dr. Carmen Fernandez, NMC Foundation board member Yoichi Matsumura, Ed Arriola, NMC Foundation president Ben Babauta, Ben Lizama from Triple J and Michael Von Siebenthal, chair of the Foundation Golf Tournament.

MARK MENDIOLA



UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Close Up students from the CNMI took time off from their busy schedule to visit with Resident Representative Pete A. Tenorio and staff at Marianas House in Washington D.C. Here, Shannon Hofschneider, Michael Salas, Eldred Sanchez, and Matthew Wheat (Marianas High School); Cindy Acera, Holly Medina, and Genevieve Ngiraibuuch (Saipan Southern High School); Ignacio Cabrera, Jhumil Esposito, and Richard Ogumoro (Kagman High School) have their picture taken with Tenorio. Chaperones included Fasefulu Tigilau, Katherine Ayers, Regina Palacios, and Darrah Benavente-Tagabuel.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CHAMBER SPEAKER

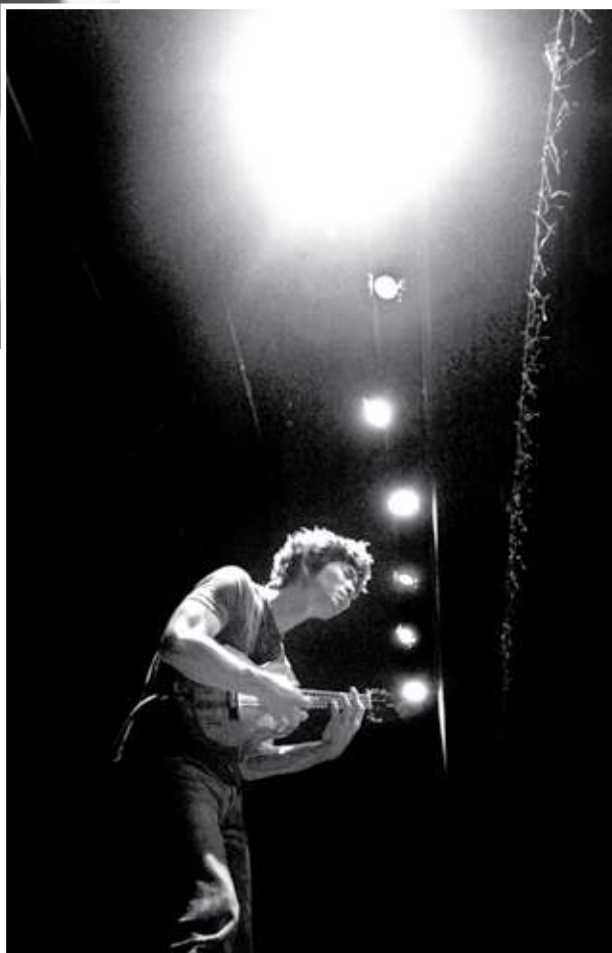
Hawaii Pacific University Professor of Economics and Finance Dr. Leroy Laney speaks about how the Guam and CNMI economies will be impacted by current uncertainties in the U.S. economy during the Saipan Chamber of Commerce general membership meeting at Saipan Grand Hotel's Seaside Hall Friday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

A MAGICAL NIGHT

Overhead lights shine down on Jake Shimabukuro during his extraordinary performance in the Hotel Association of Northern Mariana Islands and Beautify CNMI's fundraising concert dubbed "A Magical Night of Ukulele with Jake Shimabukuro" at the Saipan World Resort Thursday last week.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Close Up students Viony Hocog and Cheyenne Songsong from the Rota High School pose with Resident Representative Pete A. Tenorio and staff at Marianas House in Washington D.C.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Inas Aquiningoc and Donovan Lizama of Tinian High School, together with a chaperon, pose with Resident Representative Pete A. Tenorio and staff at Marianas House in Washington D.C.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Business

Oil chiefs: High prices not our fault

WASHINGTON (AP)—Don't blame us, oil industry chiefs told a skeptical Congress. Top executives of the country's five biggest oil companies said Tuesday they know record fuel prices are hurting people, but they argued it's not their fault and their huge profits are in line with other industries.

Appearing before a House committee, the executives were pressed to explain why they should continue to get billions of dollars in tax breaks when they made \$123 billion last year and motorists are paying record

gasoline prices at the pump.

"On April Fool's Day, the biggest joke of all is being played on American families by Big Oil," Rep. Edward Markey, D-Mass., said, aiming his remarks at the five executives sitting shoulder-to-shoulder in a congressional hearing room.

"Our earnings, although high in absolute terms, need to be viewed in the context of the scale and cyclical, long-term nature of our industry as well as the huge investment requirements," said J.S. Simon, senior vice president of Exxon

Mobil Corp., which made a record \$40 billion last year.

"We depend on high earnings during the up cycle to sustain ... investment over the long term, including the down cycles," he continued.

The up cycle has been going on too long, suggested Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, D-Mo. "The anger level is rising significantly."

Alluding to the fact that Congress often doesn't rate very high in opinion polls, Cleaver told the executives: "Your approval rating is lower than ours, and that means you're down low."

Traffic jam: Truckers protest fuel costs

RIDGEFIELD, N.J. (AP)—Tons of freight idled across the country Tuesday as independent truckers pulled their rigs off the road while others slowed to a crawl on major highways in a loosely organized protest of high fuel prices.

Using CB radios and trucking Web sites, some truckers called for a strike Tuesday to protest the high cost of diesel fuel, hoping the action might pressure President Bush to sta-

bilize prices by using the nation's oil reserves.

"The gas prices are too high," said Lamont Newberne, a trucker from Wilmington, N.C., who along with 200 drivers protested at a New Jersey Turnpike service area. "We don't make enough money to pay our bills and take care of our family."

On the Turnpike, southbound rigs "as far as the eye can see" staged a short lunchtime protest by moving about 20 mph

near Newark, jamming traffic on one of the nation's most heavily traveled highways, authorities said.

By day's end, the protests ended up scattered; Major trucking companies were not on board, and Teamsters union officials and the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association denied organizing the protests.

Federal law prohibits the association from calling for a strike because it is a trade association.

Manufacturing, construction weaken

NEW YORK (AP)—Further weakness in the manufacturing sector and construction industry underscored concerns that the U.S. economy has fallen into recession, though most analysts believe a downturn will be mild and relatively short-lived.

The Institute for Supply Management said Tuesday that manufacturing contracted for a second consecutive month in March as

manufacturers grappled with weakening order books and rising prices for raw materials.

The institute's manufacturing index registered 48.6 last month, a bit stronger than the 48.3 reading for February, which had been the weakest in five years.

Readings below 50 indicate contraction, while those above 50 show growth.

In Washington, the Commerce

Department said that construction spending fell again in February as home building tumbled for a record 24th straight month.

The department said overall construction activity dropped 0.3 percent in February, reflecting weakness not only in home building but also in nonresidential activity. Only government building projects showed a gain for the month.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Bank news, economic data boosts stocks

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street began the second quarter with a big rally Tuesday as investors rushed back into stocks, optimistic that the worst of the credit crisis has passed and that the economy is faring better than expected. The Dow Jones industrials surged nearly 400 points, and all the major indexes were up more than 3 percent. The Dow rose 391.47, or 3.19 percent, to 12,654.47. It marked the eighth-biggest point gain ever for the Dow, and the third time in two weeks it came close to or surpassed 400 points. Broader stock indicators also gained sharply. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 47.48, or 3.59 percent, to 1,370.18—the index's best start to a second quarter since 1938. And, the Nasdaq composite index rose 83.65, or 3.67 percent, to 2,362.75.

Oil slides as dollar gains ground

NEW YORK (AP)—Oil futures extended their slide Tuesday as the dollar gained ground, making commodities such as energy futures less attractive to investors seeking a hedge against inflation. But trading was choppy as a debate among investors over oil's direction played out in the marketplace. Retail gas prices, meanwhile, slipped slightly from the record they set one day earlier. Investors who previously bought commodities such as oil as a haven against inflation and a falling dollar sold Tuesday as the greenback strengthened against the euro and other currencies.

UBS, Deutsche Bank wallow in write-downs

GENEVA (AP)—Two of Europe's largest banks, UBS and Deutsche Bank, disclosed Tuesday that they are writing down billions more in bad investments, reflecting the unrelenting wave of woe from the U.S. subprime crisis. UBS AG announced the surprise departure of its chairman and forecast losses and write-downs of approximately \$19 billion in the first quarter. That puts its write-downs for the past nine months at \$37.4 billion—the most reported by any bank so far. Switzerland's largest bank also said it would post a first-quarter net loss of about \$12.1 billion, seek about \$15.1 billion in new capital and create a new unit for its troubled U.S. real estate assets. More jobs also will be cut.

Celent: 200,000 US banking jobs at risk

NEW YORK (AP)—The U.S. financial industry has been shedding jobs at a record clip, and some analysts predict the pace will only accelerate over the next year-and-a-half as banks cut costs in the face of the housing market slump and the weak economy. Analysts at the financial research firm Celent LLC said in a report Tuesday that it expects the U.S. commercial banking industry—essentially, all companies that lend or collect deposits—to lose 200,000 of its 2 million jobs over the next 12 to 18 months. An annual loss of 200,000 jobs at the nation's commercial banks would be an unprecedented number.

Nation

Cops: 3rd-graders aimed to hurt teacher

WAYCROSS, Ga. (AP)—A group of third-graders plotted to attack their teacher, bringing a broken steak knife, handcuffs, duct tape and other items for the job and assigning children tasks including covering the windows and cleaning up afterward, police said Tuesday.

The plot by as many as nine boys and girls at Center Elementary School in south Georgia was a serious threat, Waycross Police Chief Tony Tanner said.

"We did not hear anybody say they intended to kill her, but could they have accidentally killed her? Absolutely," Tanner said. "We feel like if they weren't interrupted, there would have been an attempt. Would they have been successful? We don't know."

The children, ages 8 and 9, were apparently mad at the



This photo provided by Chief of Police of Waycross, Ga., Tony Tanner, Tuesday, April 1, 2008.

teacher because she had scolded one of them for standing on a chair, Tanner said. A prosecutor said they are too young to be charged with a crime under Georgia law.

School officials alerted police Friday after a pupil tipped off a teacher that a

girl had brought a weapon to school, Tanner said.

Police seized a broken steak knife, handcuffs, duct tape, electrical and transparent tape, ribbons and a crystal paperweight from the students, who apparently intended to use them against the teacher, Tanner said.

Pentagon releases memo on harsh tactics

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Pentagon on Tuesday made public a now-defunct legal memo that approved the use of harsh interrogation techniques against terror suspects, saying that President Bush's wartime

authority trumps any international ban on torture.

The Justice Department memo, dated March 14, 2003, outlines legal justification for military interrogators to use harsh tactics against al-Qaida and Taliban detainees over-

seas—so long as they did not specifically intend to torture their captors.

Even so, the memo noted, the president's wartime power as commander in chief would not be limited by the U.N. treaties against torture.

Illegal immigrants often die anonymously

BLANDING, Utah (AP)—The foreigner is buried in a small-town cemetery, against a barbed-wire fence in an unmarked plot set aside for poor people.

He might be Mexican. He might be Guatemalan. But he's simply called No. 8, a man with no name because his identity is still unknown, a year after he was killed in a car wreck with seven other illegal immigrants in southeastern Utah.

"This is the Garden of Eden

of Utah down here," said Philip Palmer, coordinator at Blanding City Cemetery, referring to the mountain peaks in four states visible from the graveyard. "It's a good place to put him."

More than 2,000 illegal immigrants have died in the Southwest since 2002, and many are nameless in death—buried as anonymous victims of heat stroke, car crashes or other calamities.

They typically carry no ID, just the clothes on their back

and the dream of a life better than the one they left behind.

"They're filling our morgues," said Todd Matthews of Livingston, Tenn., who works for the Doe Network, a volunteer organization that helps law enforcement with unidentified remains.

More than half of the border-crossing deaths in the Southwest since 2002 have occurred in Arizona's Pima County, which includes Tucson, on the Arizona-Mexico border.

ACROSS THE NATION

FBI: Parachute isn't hijacker Cooper's

SEATTLE (AP)—The FBI says a parachute found buried in southwestern Washington is not connected to famed plane hijacker D.B. Cooper. FBI agent Laura Laughlin said Tuesday that the agency came to its conclusion after speaking with parachute experts. It also dug where children found the parachute early last month. Cooper bailed out of a Northwest Orient passenger jet with \$200,000 in ransom in November 1971. Some of the cash has been found but his fate is unknown.

Computer bug eats Ind. students' grades

EVANSVILLE, Ind. (AP)—A computer malfunction wiped out a month's worth of grades at three high schools and one middle school, giving struggling students a second chance but dismaying others. The Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corp. announced on its Web site that the malfunction occurred during spring break. Students at Harrison High had mixed reactions, depending on how the second semester was going for them, senior Ibrahim Dughaish said Monday. "Some

are really upset because they worked hard for five weeks," but others saw it as a reprieve, he said. "My son is an honor roll student and I prefer him keep his grades. He works hard for them," said parent Teresa Hayes. Upcoming report cards at the four schools will not be issued as scheduled.

Scientist: CDC bosses ignored warning

WASHINGTON (AP)—A federal scientist said Tuesday his bosses ignored pleas to alert Gulf Coast hurricane victims earlier about severe health risks from formaldehyde in government-issued trailers and once told him not to write e-mails about his concerns. Christopher De Rosa, who until recently was one of the government's top toxicologists, told a congressional panel that he repeatedly raised concerns early last year that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was not adequately informing the public of the hazard, even as symptoms of dangerous exposure were surfacing. As a result, tens of thousands of families displaced by hurricanes Katrina and Rita remained in the trailers without full knowledge of the risks, he said.

Asia

China alleges Tibetan 'suicide squads'

BEIJING (AP)—China has branded the Dalai Lama a “wolf in monk’s robes” and his followers the “scum of Buddhism.” It stepped up the rhetoric Tuesday, accusing the Nobel Peace laureate and his supporters of planning suicide attacks.

The Tibetan government-in-exile swiftly denied the charge, and the Bush administration rushed to the Tibetan Buddhist leader’s defense, calling him “a man of peace.”

“There is absolutely no indication that he wants to do anything other than have a dialogue

with China on how to discuss the serious issues there,” State Department spokesman Tom Casey said.

Wu Heping, spokesman for China’s Ministry of Public Security, claimed searches of monasteries in the Tibetan capital had turned up a large cache of weapons. They included 176 guns, 13,013 bullets, 7,725 pounds of explosives, 19,000 sticks of dynamite and 350 knives, he said.

“To our knowledge, the next plan of the Tibetan independence forces is to organize suicide squads to launch violent attacks,”

Wu told a news conference. “They claimed that they fear neither bloodshed nor sacrifice.”

Wu provided no details or evidence. He used the term “gan si dui,” a rarely used phrase directly translated as “dare-to-die corps.” The official English version of his remarks translated the term as “suicide squads.”

Wu said police had arrested an individual who he claimed was an operative of the “Dalai Lama clique,” responsible for gathering intelligence and distributing pamphlets calling for an uprising.

Top RP students strike real gold

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Students in a Philippine gold mining village strike gold every time they graduate at the top of their class—literally.

Robec June Calunia, a 12-year-old valedictorian, was among 10 students who received gold medals last week, said Francisco Tito, the leader of southern Diwalwal village.

The aim is to encourage students—children of small-

scale gold miners—to excel in school, he said.

Mountainous Diwalwal is home to 40,000 settlers, most of them miners. Tito said he thought of the program six years ago when he saw an impoverished mother weeping after unsuccessfully trying to pawn her sick child’s gold-painted school medal.

“I thought, ‘Why not give the children real gold medals.’ Anyway, we have gold here,”

he told The Associated Press in a telephone interview.

Since 2003, village leaders have solicited gold contributions from miners for 10 medals a year. It costs \$263 to produce each of the one-third ounce, 16-karat medals.

“The students are inspired. In fact, the competition has become stiff because some parents from nearby villages with bright kids now send their children to school in Diwalwal,” Tito said.

Kuwait court upholds death for Filipina in killing a child

KUWAIT CITY (AP)—A Kuwaiti appeals court upheld on Tuesday the death sentence for a Filipino housemaid, convicted of killing her employer’s seven-year-old son, the woman’s lawyer said.

Attorney Faisal al-Matar said the ruling of the Cassation Court—the country’s highest appeals point—was final. The ruling did not have an explanation, but the lawyer said it routinely takes weeks for the tribunal to make the explanation

available.

The 25-year-old maid, identified in legal documents here as May Membriiri Vecina, was convicted of slitting the throat of seven-year-old Salem al-Otaibi with a kitchen knife in January 2007. She was also found guilty of attempted murder of the boy’s 11-year-old brother Abdullah and 18-year-old sister Hajar, who both survived. She was first sentenced to death by a criminal court last July. The conviction

and sentence were then upheld by an appeals court in September, and it automatically went to the highest tribunal.

Al-Matar says that Vecina, a mother of two, had complained of mistreatment by her employer and that she has said she deplores her actions. She had allegedly told the court that her employer’s wife called her names in front of other people, just minutes before she undertook the deadly attack.

PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

US Embassy warns of kidnapping threat in Zamboanga city

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The U.S. Embassy warned its citizens Tuesday about plans by “extremist elements” to kidnap Americans and other foreigners in a southern Philippine city where U.S. counterterrorism troops have been deployed. “Extremist elements may be planning to kidnap Americans or other foreigners at hotels or other public places in the Zamboanga city area,” it said in an e-mail. U.S. Embassy spokeswoman Rebecca Thompson said she was unaware of specific details of the threat. A Philippine security official said authorities received intelligence last month that the Abu Sayyaf—a small but violent al-Qaida-linked group—planned to kidnap wealthy Filipino Chinese traders, not Americans, in the south to raise money for operations.

Estrada supporters launch campaign of persuasion

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Supporters of ousted Philippine President Joseph Estrada said Tuesday they were hoping to gather at least a million signatures to persuade him to run again. Estrada has “got a promise that he has to keep and that’s to the Filipino people,” Vince Avena, president of ERAP 2010, told The Associated Press. Estrada’s nickname is Erap and the next presidential election is expected in 2010. Estrada was forced to resign as president in 2001, midway into his six-

year term, amid massive anti-corruption protests. The former action movie actor was convicted of plunder last September after a six-year trial, then was pardoned a month later by his successor, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Estrada, who turns 71 on April 19, said he had nothing to do with the signature campaign and was not planning to stand in the 2010 election.

Permanent ban on kidney transplants for foreigners sought

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A Philippine official called Tuesday for a permanent ban on kidney transplants for foreigners, saying a new government regulation would not stop a thriving black market in organ trade. Health Secretary Francisco Duque signed an order last week to create a government regulatory board to oversee kidney donations and transplants while making such highly secretive deals more transparent and ethical. Duque’s order, which took more than two years to craft, prioritizes Filipino patients over foreigners in the allocation of locally available kidneys for transplants and directs authorities to set limits. He has temporarily banned kidney transplants involving foreigners until such limits are set. Kidney trading, involving the poor and prisoners who sell their organs for paltry sums to syndicates catering mostly to foreign clients, has been reported by the local media and reflects the depth of the Southeast Asian nation’s poverty.

World

US-Russia missile deal possible

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP)—Scrambling to seal a missile defense deal this week-end, the U.S. is offering guarantees to assure the Russians the system isn’t a European military threat aimed at them.

A key pledge: The U.S. won’t activate new sites in Poland and the Czech Republic unless Iran proves itself an imminent threat to Europe by test-flying a missile capable of reaching the continent.

A broader but less-specific agreement seems assured when President Bush sits down with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday in the Black Sea resort of Sochi. That would be a “stra-

tegic framework” for relations between the two countries after Bush and Putin leave office.

But the White House seems to think there could be a bigger breakthrough, on the defense system to guard Europe against a missile attack from Iran or elsewhere.

The proposed limitation linked to Iran testing is one of several measures designed to assuage Russian security concerns. It’s not yet clear whether they are enough to persuade Moscow to go along.

“Obviously, we’ve got a lot of work to do to allay suspicions and old fears, but I think we’re making pretty good

progress along those lines,” Bush said Tuesday. He spoke in Kiev, Ukraine, before flying to Romania for a NATO summit where missile defense—including some Europeans’ worries about Russia’s strong objections—will be on the agenda. Bush would like NATO to announce its support.

If Bush and Putin fail to settle differences on missile defense, their meeting still might be declared a success if, as expected, the two men say they have an understanding on the most important issues that Washington and Moscow should deal with as both capitals transition to new leaders.

Zimbabwe opposition leader: I won

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP)—The main opposition leader insisted Tuesday he has won Zimbabwe’s presidential election outright and denied persistent reports he was negotiating to ease out President Robert Mugabe, who has led the country from liberation to ruin.

In his first public comments since Saturday’s election, Morgan Tsvangirai said he was waiting for an official announcement of the results from the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission before he would enter any talks with Mugabe.

A businessman close to the state electoral commission and a lawyer close to the opposition said earlier the two men’s aides were negotiating a graceful exit for Mugabe, the country’s leader of 28 years. Both sources spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue. Several diplomats said they had heard similar reports of secret negotiations but could not confirm talks were under way.

“There are no discussions,” Tsvangirai said. “Let’s wait for ZEC to complete its work, then

we can discuss the circumstances that will affect the people.”

Deputy Information Minister Bright Matonga also denied it, telling the British Broadcasting Corp. “There are no negotiations whatsoever, because we are waiting for the presidential results, so why do we need to hold any secret talks?”

Tensions rose as people stayed away from work to await results. A senior police officer, Wayne Bvudzijena, went on state radio to say: “Our forces are more than ready to deal with perpetrators of violence.”

Castro reforms: DVDs, farms for Cubans

HAVANA (AP)—Cubans snapped up DVD players, motorbikes and pressure cookers for the first time Tuesday as Raul Castro’s new government loosened controls on consumer goods and invited private farmers to plant tobacco, coffee and other crops on unused state land.

Combined with other reforms announced in recent days, the measures suggest substantial changes are being driven by the new president, who vowed when he took over from his brother Fidel to remove some of the more irksome limitations on the daily lives of Cubans.

Analysts wondered how far the communist government is willing to go.

“Cuban people can’t survive on the salaries people are paying them. Average men and women have been screaming that at the top of their lungs for many years,” said Felix Masud-Piloto, director of the Center for Latino Research at DePaul University. “Now after many years, the government is listening.”

Many of the shoppers filling stores Tuesday lamented the fact that the goods are unaffordable on the government salaries they earn. But that didn’t stop them from lining up to see electronic gadgets previously available only to foreigners and companies.



A vendor shows shoppers an electric rice maker at a store in Havana, Tuesday, April 1, 2008.

Britain delays cutting troops in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—Britain froze plans Tuesday to withdraw about 1,500 soldiers this spring after the faltering effort to drive Shiite militias from Basra raised doubts whether the Iraqis are capable of maintaining security in oil-rich southern Iraq.

The British decision was announced in London one week before the top U.S. commander in Iraq appears before Congress to offer his recommendation on how fast America should draw down its own forces.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Monday in Copenhagen, Denmark that last

week’s violence in Shiite areas had not changed American plans to withdraw more combat forces by July.

But second thoughts about Iraqi security capabilities emerged as Iraq’s government reported a 50 percent rise in the number of people killed in March over the previous month.

Much of the increase was a result of the fighting between Iraqi government forces and Shiite militiamen in the southern city of Basra. The conflict quickly spread, engulfing Baghdad and major cities throughout the Shiite south.

Environment

HELP CNMI COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Take the 'Right Route' on April 11

Your carbon footprint is the direct effect that your actions and lifestyle have on the environment in terms of CO₂ emissions. Probably the biggest contributors to your personal "footprint" are your travel needs, and your electricity demands. These actions contribute to accelerating global warming and climate change.

Warming the atmosphere—the greenhouse effect

Heat from the sun passes through the atmosphere and warms the surface of the Earth. Some of this heat is reflected back into outer space through the atmosphere and some is retained, just like in a greenhouse. It is this balance of absorption and reflection, known as the greenhouse effect, that has kept the Earth's temperature stable for eons. Over billions of years the Earth has developed a system that can absorb and recycle the gases produced by natural process like plant and animal respiration, volcanic eruptions and forest fires.

As oil and coal are burned, the carbon they contain combines with oxygen in the air to give off heat and produce carbon dioxide, and other gases. As population increases and development spreads, more and more energy is being used and ever-increasing volumes of carbon dioxide are being generated. Since 1750, when written records were

first kept, the global concentration of carbon dioxide has increased by about 30 percent. Emissions of methane and nitrous oxide, from fuel consumption, converting forest to farmland, cultivation and fertilization of soils, production of ruminant livestock and management of livestock manure, have increased by roughly 131 percent and 17 percent in 250 years. However, carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas.

The amounts of greenhouse gases that are being produced have exceeded the Earth's ability to absorb them and they are accumulating in the atmosphere. As they build up they trap more and more heat from the sun inside the atmosphere. It is generally accepted that this build up is one of the primary causes of an increase in the average temperature of the Earth, which will eventually cause significant changes in the Earth's climate.

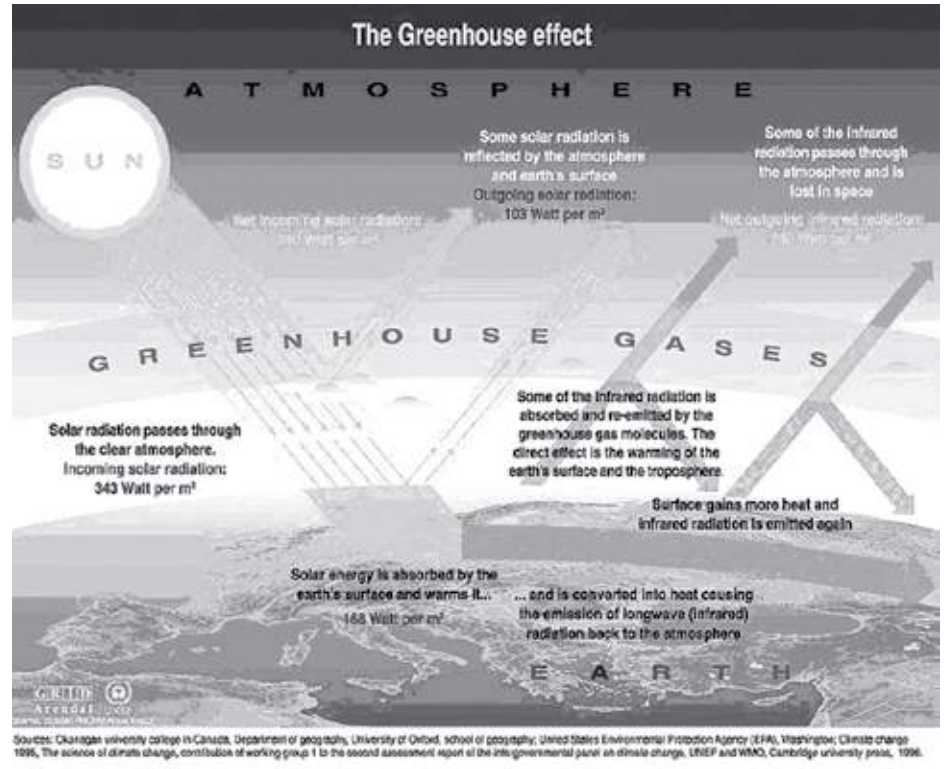
Climate change

One of the greatest challenges to sustainable development in the 21st century is climate change. Climate change is a change in the "average weather" that a region experiences. By increasing the amount of heat-trapping gases released, humankind has enhanced the warming capability of the natural greenhouse effect. It is the human-induced enhanced greenhouse effect that causes environmental concern.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projects that unless drastic action is taken, global temperatures will continue to rise and extreme events will become more frequent and intense. Most governments in the world are making efforts to reduce the production of greenhouse gases, even though fossil fuels will remain the mainstay of energy production well into the 21st century and agriculture must produce more and more food. Governments are also looking for ways to remove the excess carbon dioxide that is already in the atmosphere, but the amounts are so huge this may not be practical. This has serious implications for the fragile and vulnerable islands of the Pacific, already witnessing the negative impacts of climate change as sea levels rise.

The danger in the Pacific

Many Pacific islands are extremely vulnerable to climate change, climate variability, and sea level rise and will be among the first to suffer the impacts of climate change and among the first to be forced to adapt or abandon or relocate from their environment. The islands are low lying or have coastal features and characteristics that make them particularly vulnerable to climate change, variability and sea level change. In addition to significant coastal



impacts climate change will affect biodiversity, soils and the water supplies of small islands. Most small island states will find it extremely difficult to adapt to these changing conditions. The impacts will be felt for many generations because of the small island states' low adaptive capacity, high sensitivity to external shocks and high vulnerability to natural disasters.

Failure to adapt to climate change now could lead to high social and economic costs in the future. For the low lying atolls, the economic disruption could be

catastrophic, even to the extent of requiring population relocation into other islands or increasing the number of people emigrating from the islands. Some areas of coral reefs, may be so enfeebled by overfishing that they may not be able to recover from bleaching events in the future. Public pressure is mounting for action on adaptation. There is growing community and government concern about the need to reduce the islands' vulnerability and manage the risks posed by extreme events and long-term change. (CoCo)

Managaha boasts of new high-tech wastewater treatment

Brief History

In January 2008, the U.S. EPA issued the NPDES permit for the operation of the Managaha Wastewater Treatment System. The issuance of the permit was the culmination of a three-year effort to upgrade the wastewater treatment system for one of Saipan's most pristine environmental attractions. The newly installed wastewater treatment plant on Managaha Island employs the use of a submerged membrane separation activated sludge process, often referred to as a membrane bioreactor (MBR) system. This is a relatively new treatment process and one which is rapidly replacing older activated sludge treatment plant systems throughout the United States and other developed nations. It is believed that this is the first wastewater treatment system in Micronesia that employs the membrane bioreactor system.

It was not until the 1990s that filtering technology had improved to the point where they were determined to be practical for use in wastewater treatment plants. Stricter U.S. EPA discharge regulations have spawned a tremendous growth in the use of membrane filters.

The growing use of the filters has made the process more appealing, practical and more economical than the traditional wastewater practices. Membrane filters, such as the one on Managaha, have been proven to safeguard public health, occupy less space, and consume less energy while consistently



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The newly installed wastewater treatment plant on Managaha Island.

producing a high quality water suitable for reuse or recycling.

The choice for this type of system for use on Managaha resulted from several meetings with DEQ, EPA and Tasi Tours for a reasonably priced and easily maintained system that met or exceeded expected effluent requirements. The treatment plant selected was manufactured in Japan and installed by Pacific Daiken under the direction of the manufacturer's technical representatives. Start-up operations began in April 2007. Initial operational problems were resolved and the old treatment facility phased out and demolished. US EPA staff made a site visit in December 2007 and were impressed

by the initial results, the low impact on the island, and relative ease of maintenance. The attached photos show that the outward appearance of the facility is both pleasing and unobtrusive. This is important for the tourist industry as objectionable odors, noise, or a large exposed plant would detract from the island's natural appeal.

MBR System

Membrane systems for wastewater treatment are an outgrowth from the use of reverse osmosis in the production of potable water from brackish or seawater. The mechanism by which the membrane filtration operates is simple in concept. The process uses a submerged hollow

polyethylene fiber membrane with a 0.4F (micron) pore size. The membranes are a physical barrier that captures all suspended particles larger than the membrane pore size. The membrane separation unit is internally immersed in the bioreactor. As the wastewater passes through the membrane residual suspended solids, bacteria, viruses, degradable organic molecules and other impurities are separated from the wastewater. Air moving across the membrane keeps it free of solids build-up allowing a higher concentration of solids in the aeration basin.

Tasi Tours asked Azuma Limited of Saipan to design the treatment plant on Managaha and after EPA and DEQ reviews, was purchased by Tasi Tours from Daiki Johkasou of Japan.

The filtered wastewater is passed through a photooxidation system, which is a combination of ultraviolet light and oxidants (ozone, chlorine) to kill residual bacteria and viruses.

Results to Date

In the months the membrane filter has been in operation there has been a dramatic improvement in the effluent quality. Impurities in the effluent, measured by the BOD test, have been reduced by over 99 percent. As the plant operation was adjusted and the waste stream stabilized the treatment continued to improve. At present the treated wastewater is recycled through the toilets on Managaha saving potable water and power. All make-up water for the process is

from a combination of rainwater catchment and reverse osmosis water. This assures a continual high quality effluent.

The good news for the Commonwealth is that this new wastewater treatment process will safeguard the pristine waters around Managaha Island. As of today, the treated effluent from the membrane filter is discharging wastewater that is cleaner than it has been for the past three decades. The Department of Public Lands in cooperation with Tasi Tours has used modern technology to ensure our visitors that the waters around Managaha will remain safe and pure.

MBR Use for the CNMI

For future consideration by CNMI government officials, membrane systems for wastewater treatment have replaced many older activated sludge plants in the US mainland. The membrane systems not only produce an exceptionally high quality effluent, they occupy less space, require less maintenance, and consume less power than the older activated sludge plants. The largest membrane systems constructed to date are in the 20 million gallon per day size, about 5 times larger than the Agingan or Sadog Tasi treatment plants.

As the membrane filtration technology continues to improve the plants will become smaller, more efficient, and continue to reduce overall maintenance costs.

Prepared by Stan Good for the Division of Environmental Quality.

Life & Style

Married troops can live together in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—When American soldiers get off duty in Iraq, the men usually return to their quarters, the women to theirs. But Staff Sgt. Marvin Frazier gets to go back to a small trailer with two pushed-together single beds that he shares with his wife.

In a historic but little-noticed change in policy, the Army is allowing scores of husband-and-wife soldiers to live and sleep together in the war zone—a move aimed at preserving marriages, boosting morale and perhaps bolstering re-enlistment rates at a time when the military is struggling to fill its ranks five years into the fighting.

“It makes a lot of things easier,” said Frazier, 33, a helicopter maintenance supervisor in the 3rd Infantry Division. “It really adds a lot of stress, being separated. Now you can sit face-to-face and try to work out things and comfort each other.”

Long-standing Army rules barred soldiers of the opposite sex from sharing sleeping quarters in war zones. Even married troops lived only in all-male or all-female quarters and had no private living space.

But in May 2006, Army commanders in Iraq, with little fanfare, decided that it is in the military’s interest to promote wedded bliss. In other words: What God has joined together, let no manual put asunder.

“It’s better for the soldiers, which means overall it’s better for the Army,” said Command Maj. Mark Thornton of the 3rd Infantry.

Military analysts said this is the first war in which the Army even gave the idea any serious consideration—a reflection not only of the large number of couples sent to war this time, but also of the way the fighting has dragged on and strained marriages with repeated 12- and 15-month tours of duty.

While some couples were also sent into the 1991 Gulf War, the fighting was over before their living arrangements became an issue, said Lory Manning, a



U.S. Army Sgt. Jacqueline McCloud, 29, right, and her husband, Sgt. Jason McCloud, 24, left, hold their wedding portrait at Forward Operating Base Marez in Mosul, 360 kilometers (225 miles) northwest of Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, March 27, 2008.

retired Navy captain who studies how military policies affect women for the nonprofit Women’s Research and Education Institute.

More than 10,000 couples are in the Army. Exactly how many are serving in the war zone, and how many of those are living together, are not clear. The Army said it does not keep track.

But Frazier and his wife, Staff Sgt. Keisha Frazier, are among about 40 married Army couples living together on “Couples Row” at Camp Striker, which is on the outskirts of Baghdad and is one of more than 150 U.S. military camps in Iraq. Similarly, a Couples Row opened in October at nearby Camp Victory, though it has trailers for only seven of the many couples who have requested them.

Husbands and wives are still prohibited from public displays of affection, under the same strict regulations that govern unmarried men and women in uniform. Holding hands and kissing, whether on duty or in the chow hall, are against the rules.

“It’s rough on marriages when, over the course of years, you don’t see each other,” Man-

ning said. “It would make sense, certainly from a morale perspective and for the Army, to try to preserve marriages.”

The only downside of married soldiers sharing sleeping quarters, she said, would be an increased risk of pregnancies.

Whether the policy applies to troops in Afghanistan is unclear. Pentagon officials said that decision is up to individual commanders, but they did not return repeated calls for comment.

John Pike, director of the military think tank GlobalSecurity.org., said: “I think they are looking under the sofa cushions for anything they can do to improve retention. They spend a lot of money getting these people trained up.”

After spending the first five months of their 15-month deployment on separate bases in tents with up to 15 other soldiers, all of the same sex, the Fraziers prize the small degree of privacy and intimacy they gained after moving in together in October.

Still newlyweds, Sgt. Amanda Christopher, 25, and her husband, Sgt. Matthew Christopher, 22, said the change in rules has been a blessing for their nearly year-old marriage, four months of

which has been spent in Iraq.

Both work at the military hospital in Baghdad’s fortified Green Zone, where Amanda is a licensed practical nurse and Matthew is in patient administration, which can include mortuary duties.

“Some of the stuff I’ve seen, if she weren’t here, I’d be a lot less cool about it,” Matthew said as the pair sat inside their potpourri-scented living quarters—a mere 120 square feet, with a TV set atop two black lockboxes, an impressive collection of stuffed animals and a Chicago Bears plaque. “There was one night in particular, I saw something and I just thought, ‘Oh, God.’ I came in here, talked to her for a few minutes, went outside, took a deep breath and I was good to go.”

Because of the prohibition on public displays of affection, the Christophers declined even to put their arms around each other for a photo.

“It’s not like in the civilian world where if you see your boyfriend at work you can just go, ‘Oh, hi, Babe,’” Amanda said. “We’re in uniform, and we have to maintain a professional demeanor at work.”

John Paul aide says pope still with him

ROME (AP)—The longtime private secretary of Pope John Paul II said Tuesday that he still turns to the late pontiff whenever he has a problem.

Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, who was the closest aide to John Paul for nearly 40 years, grew emotional during an event in Rome on the eve of the third anniversary of the pontiff’s death.

“I can’t forget his last goodbye, when he took my hand and I kissed his for the last time,” Dziwisz said. “This goodbye will stay with me forever.”

John Paul died on April 2, 2005, after a nearly 27-year pontificate. Shortly afterward, Pope Benedict XVI put him on the fast track for possible sainthood, waiving a customary five-year waiting period.

Benedict will hold a Mass on Wednesday marking his death.

Dziwisz said John Paul and Benedict were “true friends” and recalled anecdotes from his decades with John Paul, describing, for example, how the pontiff used to bless the city of Rome before going to sleep.

“I’ve accompanied him for almost 40 years, now he is accompanying me—and whenever I have a problem I turn to him,” said Dziwisz, now the archbishop of Krakow, Poland—a position that John Paul held himself before being elected pope.

Dziwisz said he receives letters from couples asking for John Paul’s intercession in order to have children or from cancer patients hoping to be cured. Some say that after praying to him they got better, Dziwisz said.

Monsignor Slawomir Oder, the church official spearheading the cause to make John Paul a saint, shared his own memory of John Paul’s death: “I remember thinking that a saint had died.”

Oder said that places of prayers in memory of John Paul have sprung up across the world—including in Iraq, Russia and Morocco—in a sign of how universal John Paul’s message was.

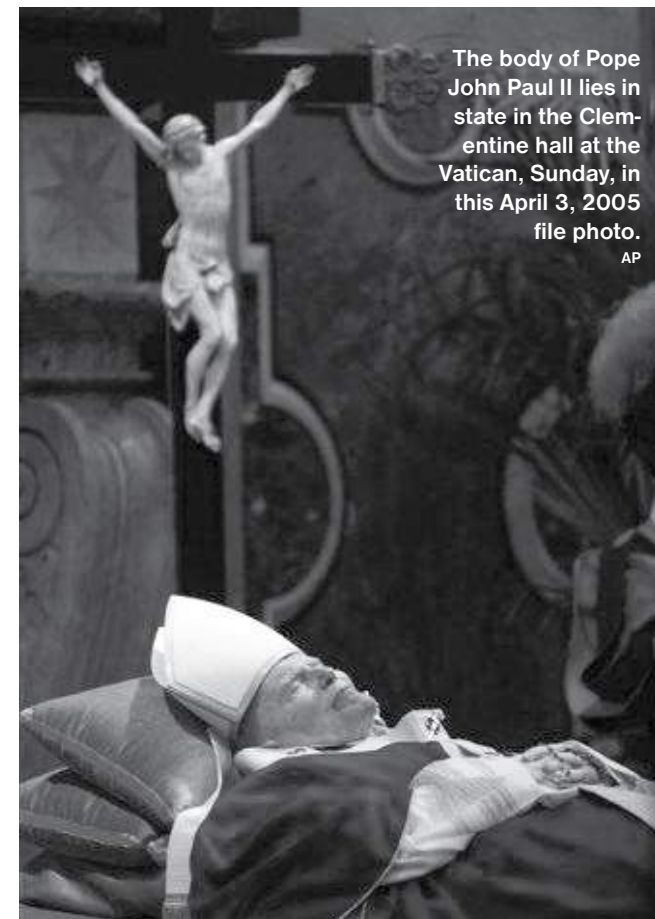
John Paul “was able to enter our homes like one of us,” he said in the ceremony at the Rome basilica Santa Maria in Trastevere. The event was organized by the Sant’Egidio Community, a Rome-based lay Catholic organization. He “had the ability to read people’s hearts.”

Oder said earlier this week that he had finished a report analyzing documentation to support the canonization process.

The report summarizes and analyzes all the documentation about John Paul’s life and virtues that had been gathered since his death, including testimony from witnesses and the late pontiff’s own writings.

“We need to be patient and optimistic,” said Oder.

The Vatican’s complicated saint-making procedures—which can include the weighing of favorable and unfavorable information—require that a miracle attributed to the candidate’s intercession be confirmed before beatification. A second miracle is necessary for canonization.



The body of Pope John Paul II lies in state in the Clementine hall at the Vatican, Sunday, in this April 3, 2005 file photo.

Study: Octopuses kinky creatures of sea

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Wild octopuses are far from the shy, unromantic loners their captive brethren appear to be, a new study finds. Marine biologists from the University of California, Berkeley, who journeyed off the coast of Indonesia to study octopus love lives found a kinky and violent society of jealous murders, gender subterfuge and once-in-a-lifetime sex.

The scientists watched the

Abdopus aculeatus octopus, which are the size of an orange, for several weeks, in research published recently in the science journal Marine Biology. They witnessed picky, macho males carefully select a mate, then guard their newly domesticated digs so jealously that they would occasionally use their 8-to-10-inch tentacles to strangle to death a romantic rival.

The researchers also observed

smaller “sneaker” male octopuses put on feminine airs, such as swimming girlishly near the bottom and keeping their male brown stripes hidden in order to win unsuspecting conquests.

And size does matter—but not how you’d think.

“If you’re going to spend time guarding a female, you want to go for the biggest female you can find because she’s going to produce more eggs,” said UC Berke-

ley biologist Roy Caldwell, who co-wrote the study. “It’s basically an investment strategy.”

Shortly after the female gives birth, about a month after conception, both the mother and father die, researchers said.

“It’s not the sex that leads to death,” said Christine Huffard, the study’s lead author. “It’s just that octopuses produce offspring once during a very short lifespan of a year.”

Pants go wide, slouchy—and political

By JOSEPH V. AMODIO
SPECIAL TO NEWSDAY

If there was ever a woman in need of retail therapy, we're guessing it's Hillary Rodham Clinton. She's up, down, a shoo-in, a lost cause—lordy, the mere mortals among us would've blown a gasket by now and run fleeing to the nearest mall.

If only she had the time. One glimpse of the racks and tears would well up all over again.

Just look, Hil. All those pants.

It's not exactly a state secret—the U.S. senator and presidential hopeful is pro-trouser. And why not? She looks good in them.

(Better than those drab dresses and headbands of yesteryear.) If they happen to convey some sort of subliminal message about power, all the better.

Women who wear pants are able to move at an energetic pace while sending “a subtle message of a woman not bound by society-imposed constraints,” says LaVelle Olexa, a senior vice president at Lord & Taylor.

OK. Impressive. But some pants offer something much more basic, too, suggests Jasmine H. Chang, executive fashion editor at O, The Oprah Magazine.

“Pants, worn with a heel—it's dead-on sexy,” she says.

Now we're talking.

Consumers have plenty of pants to choose from this year, with silhouettes for every body type and messages for every mood. There are kinky capris, edgy skinny pants and—the trouser of the moment—slouchy, wide-legged, often high-waisted pants inspired by menswear but unmistakably feminine.

“They give a woman a sense of strength, they're innately comfortable, and there's something elegant about the wider-legged pant,” says Gregg Andrews, a fashion director at Nordstrom. Think of the style icons who first wore them—Hepburn, Harlow, Dietrich. The fluidity “softens the masculine edge that a trouser can sometimes have,” he says.

It's all part of the dressier aesthetic designers started emphasizing last season, after years of going gaga for dresses (like those recent frilly, baby-doll numbers) and low-rise jeans (which plunged further south than Magellan).

“It's not the Annie Hall androgynous thing,” Andrews says. “The word trousers evokes masculinity, but we're not talking dressing like men,” he says.

It's hard to believe that plain old pants once caused a major ruckus. And not that long ago. Sure, Hollywood types wore them, and by the '50s and '60s, they were fine for casual wear. But set foot in a school, church or office, and women were expected to show some leg (calves only, please).

That had changed by 1976, when Edith Bunker walked downstairs in a pantsuit on an episode of “All in the Family.” Archie freaked. No wife of his, blah, blah, blah. Edith didn't listen. Neither did anybody else. Trouser acceptance was upon us. A year later, “Annie Hall” hit theaters, and Diane Keaton's swashbuckling way with a blazer and trousers was all the rage.

Today, Andrews likes the combo of a full pant with a ruched or pleated top, a hipbone-length jacket emphasizing the waist, heels—small feminine details that balance the look.

For women unsure of the wide leg, there are always flat-front, slimmer cuts, suggests Chang. She's a fan of Piazza Sempione,

the pricey Italian brand, sleek as a Ferrari. “They're always perfect, with a little stretch for extra comfort,” she says.

There are also Gap chinos (she has several in various shades). And don't forget Banana Republic, the go-to place for “the working woman's pant” and a great source for petites, she says.

“The girls here love to wear dresses,” Chang notes, referring to her fashion department colleagues. “But I'm so much more comfortable in pants,” she says.

Sure, a dress is a no-brainer and often requires less tailoring than pants do. But sometimes it just can't compete with the get-up-and-go of pants, she adds. “To keep your legs crossed all the time—not my thing.”



AP

Democratic presidential hopeful, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., campaigns at Mercyhurst College in Erie, Pa., Tuesday, April 1, 2008.

WHAT WORKS BEST

By JOSEPH V. AMODIO
SPECIAL TO NEWSDAY

Tip: Not too wide, not too skinny, and flat-front works for most (“pleats make your stomach pooch out,” says Jasmine H. Chang, of O, The Oprah Magazine).

What's afoot: Chang likes pumps, slingbacks or lace-up oxfords.

CROPPED

Tip: Capris look best on long legs, says Lord & Taylor's LaVelle Olexa. New versions offer menswear cuffs or tab-closure waistbands, says Gregg Andrews, of Nordstrom.

What's afoot: Flats, wedges, heels—though wide hems demand height. “Match shoe to skin tone,” says Chang, “to elongate the leg.”

WIDE-LEG

Tip: A great camouflager and good on most, save for petites. “The proportion is forgiving,” says Olexa.

What's afoot: Think “height with comfort,” says Chang. That means platforms or wedges.

SKINNY

Tip: Skip the leggings, “that's over,” says Chang (with relief). Better—a narrow stovepipe pant, paired with tees and cropped jackets on thin women, tunics on fuller, curvier figures, says Olexa.

What's afoot: Ballet flats (for a '50s Audrey Hepburn vibe), gladiator sandals, or heels for a sexy, leggy look, says Andrews.

Death and Funeral Announcement

Mr. Julian Attao Concepcion

also known as “Jude”

Passed away on Monday, March 31, 2008 at Commonwealth Health Center, Saipan.

Jude was born on Saipan September 26, 1951. He was 56 years old.

In his new life, he now joins his:

Mother: Carmen Attao Concepcion

Sister/Brother: Vicky C. Tudela, Henry A. Concepcion, Maria A. Concepcion

Sister-in-Law: Celina C. Concepcion

Maternal Grandparents: Soledad Cabrera San Nicolas & Vicente Magofna Attao

Paternal Grandparents: Rosa Quitano Taitano & Julian Cruz Concepcion

Mother In Law: Trinidad Arriola Borja

Niece & Nephew: Raelene Salas Concepcion, Joey Sablan Borja

Numerous Aunties & Uncles

His memories will live in the hearts of his:

Wife: Victoria Borja Concepcion

Children: Cartrina Concepcion & LJ Deleon Guerrero (Julian Joseph)

Tanya Concepcion & John Iguel (Trini Marie)

Lorna Concepcion & John Paul Flores (Juden & Rocco)

Victor Jude Concepcion & Roxanne Pangelinan

Father: Cesarino Taitano Concepcion

Brothers/Sisters and Spouses:

(†)Victoria Concepcion & Joaquin /Annie Tudela & Children

Edward & Dorothy Concepcion & Children

Serafino Concepcion

Alice C. & Jess Taitano & Children

Julie C. & Frank Crisostomo & Children

Vicente & Mel Concepcion & Children

Linda Concepcion

Pat C. & Tony Sablan & Children

Danny & Virginia Concepcion & Children

Richard & Lucy Concepcion & Children

Frances C. & Joe Agulto & Children

Winnie C. & Patrick Celis & Children

Father In-Law: Victorino Tudela Borja

Brothers/Sisters In Law and Spouses:

Rose & Kilroy Guerrero & Children

Lucy & Greg Hurst & Children

Joe & Evelyn Borja & Children

John & Jessica Borja & Children

Reared Son: Carlos Ketebangang

Numerous Aunties, Uncles, Cousins, Nieces & Nephew, God Children

Schedule of Services:

Daily Masses is being offered every morning at 6:00 am at Kristo Rai Church. And a nightly rosary is being said every evening at 7:00 pm at Kristo Rai Church starting from March 31, 2008 to April 07, 2008.

On Tuesday, April 08, 2008, his remains will be escorted at 7:30 am from Borja's Funeral Home to The Mount Carmel Cathedral. Mass of Christian Burial will be commence at 11:00 am & Interment services will be followed at the Mt. Carmel Cemetery Chalan Kanoa.

Please join us in prayers.

Mrs. Victoria Borja Concepcion, Children & Family.



Safely Home

I am home in heaven, dear ones;
Oh so happy and so bright!
There is perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light.
All the pain and grief is over,
Every restless tossing passed;
I am now at peace forever,
Safely home in heaven at last.
Did you wonder how I so calmly
Trod the valley of the shade?
Oh, but Jesus' love illumined
Every dark and fearful glade.
And he came himself to meet me
In that way so hard to tread;
And with Jesus' arm to lean on,
Could I have one doubt or dread?
Then you must not grieve so sorely,
For I love you dearly still;
Try to look beyond earth's shadows,
Pray to trust our Father's will.
There is work still waiting for you,
So you must not idly stand;
Do it now, while life remains,
You shall rest in Jesus' land.
When that work is all completed,
He will gently call you home;
Oh, the rapture of that meeting,
Oh, the joy to see you come!

Harvard Lampoon sends up Geographic

BOSTON (AP)—It looks like a typical National Geographic cover with the signature yellow border. So what's Paris Hilton doing on there? The folks at Harvard Lampoon persuaded employees of one of the nation's most respected magazines to help them ensure their April Fool's parody—with satire on Mongolia's wildest water-parks and "Native Girls Gone Wild"—looked authentic.

The issue, coming out Tuesday, is the latest in a string of Harvard Lampoon magazine parodies. But the undergraduate group had never done National Geographic, which quickly re-

sponded when contacted by the students last summer.

"My guess was they were just extremely bored and they were tired of working with animals and scientists and wanted to hang out with college students," said Hayes Davenport, who edited the magazine with fellow Harvard senior Ross Arbes.

Davenport said other publications have helped with their parodies in the past, such as when USA Today printed the Lampoon's version on its press in 1989. And he said National Geographic's staffers—who had no editorial control over the parody—were eager to make fun of their ultraserious image.

The magazine helped print the parody and distribute it alongside its own April edition in some areas, Arbes said. A designer also helped lay out the parody to make it look as much like the original as possible.

"They provided things that were really valuable to us," Arbes said.

Editors from National Geographic could have

not be reached Monday, but the magazine released a facetious statement.

"Editors are unavailable for comment, having left the country ... as usual," it said. "There are reports of laughter from parts of the building, but that

could just be because we are a fun place to work."

In one article, the Lampoon takes aim at a National Geographic contributor who toils away for years in search of a specific species. Their "Seeking the Island Fox" article has the writer cold, wet and annoyed at getting just a brief glance of a "pretty boring" animal.

In another jab at National Geographic's staid image, the Lampoon created three new editions to help keep the magazine relevant for younger generations, and features Hilton in a "Your Wildest Animal Fantasies" story.

And, of course, the Lampoon's version offers a send-up to anthropological nudity. A photo of a lion is actually made up of dozens of images of women's bare chests.

ON THE NET:

■ **Harvard Lampoon:**
<http://www.harvardlampoon.com>
■ **National Geographic:**
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com>

This photo released by Harvard Lampoon, scheduled to hit the newsstands April 1, 2008, is shown.

AP

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★ ★ ★

NOW SHOWING

★ ★ ★



Superhero Movie

Friday 4:15 7:00 9:45
Saturday 1:10 4:15 7:00 9:45
Sunday 1:10 4:15 7:00
Mon thru Thurs 4:15 7:00

Drake Bell, Sara Paxton
Comedy, Satire • Rated PG13

Synopsis

After being bitten by a genetically altered dragonfly, high school loser Rick Riker develops superhuman abilities like incredible strength and armored skin. Rick decides to use his new powers for good and becomes a costumed crime fighter known as "The Dragonfly." However, standing in the way of his destiny is the villainous Lou Landers. After an experiment gone wrong, Lou develops the power to steal a person's life force and in a dastardly quest for immortality becomes the supervillain, "The Hourglass."



Definitely Maybe

Friday 4:05 7:25 9:40
Saturday 1:05 4:05 7:25 9:40
Sunday 1:05 4:05 7:25
Mon thru Thurs 4:05 7:25

Ryan Reynolds, Abigail Breslin
Romantic Comedy • Rated PG13

Synopsis

A thirtysomething Manhattan dad is in the midst of a divorce when his 10-year-old daughter, Maya, starts to question him about his life before marriage. Maya wants to know absolutely everything about how her parents met and fell in love: Will's story begins in 1992, as a young, starry-eyed aspiring politician who moves to New York from Wisconsin in order to work on the presidential campaign.



Dr. Seuss' Horton Hears A Who

Friday 4:20 7:05 9:35
Saturday 1:15 4:20 7:05 9:35
Sunday 1:15 4:20 7:05
Mon thru Thurs 4:20 7:05

Jim Carrey (v), Steve Carell (v)
Family, Animated • Rated G

Synopsis

An imaginative elephant named Horton hears a faint cry for help coming from a tiny speck of dust floating through the air. Although Horton doesn't know it yet, that speck houses an entire city named Who-ville, inhabited by the microscopic Whos, led by the Mayor. Despite being ridiculed and threatened by his neighbors, who think he has lost his mind, Horton is determined to save the party—because "a person's a person, no matter how small."



10,000 BC

Friday 4:30 7:10 9:50
Saturday 1:30 4:30 7:10 9:50
Sunday 1:30 4:30 7:10
Mon thru Thurs 4:30 7:10

Omar Sharif, Steven Strait
Drama, Adventure • Rated PG13



Never Back Down

Friday 4:25 7:35 9:55
Saturday 1:25 4:25 7:30 9:55
Sunday 1:25 4:25 7:30
Mon thru Thurs 4:25 7:30

Sean Faris, Djimon Hounsou
Action, Drama • Rated PG13



The Spiderwick Chronicles

Friday 4:00 7:20 9:30
Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:20 9:30
Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:20
Mon thru Thurs 4:00 7:20

Seth Rogen, Mary-Loise Parker
Fantasy, Children • Rated PG13



Rambo

Friday 4:10 7:15 10:00
Saturday 1:20 4:10 7:15 10:00
Sunday 1:20 4:10 7:15
Mon thru Thurs 4:10 7:15

Sylvester Stallone, Julie Benz
Action, Adventure • Rated R

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Woman arrested near John Cusack's home

MALIBU, Calif. (AP)—A woman who was ordered to stay away from John Cusack has been arrested on suspicion of stalking the actor and violating a restraining order.

Emily Leatherman was taken into custody Sunday after Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies were called to Cusack's neighborhood, where a cab driver reported that a passenger didn't

have enough money to pay for the ride to get there, sheriff's spokesman Steve Whitmore said Monday.

As the deputies were responding to the situation, they were

flagged down by Cusack.

"He told them he recognized the woman in the cab and that she had been stalking him," Whitmore said.



Cusack

He said deputies found evidence at the scene that led to the arrest, but he declined to elaborate, citing the investigation.

Leatherman was arrested for investigation of stalking, violating a restraining

order and petty theft. She was being held on \$150,000 bail.

Whitmore said the 33-year-old woman is "considered a transient in the Santa Monica area."

A call to Cusack's publicist wasn't immediately returned.

In July 2006, Cusack was granted a temporary restraining order stipulating that Leatherman stay at least 500 feet away from him, his home, his work, his car and offices or companies in which he does business.

In court papers, Cusack said Leatherman "is showing unusual interest by stalking, throwing long letters of interest over my fence in bags with rocks and screwdrivers inside, making unannounced visits to offices of people I work with in an attempt to meet with me and listing my address as her own during a recent arrest."

Leatherman has claimed she only sent Cusack two letters.

Myers' latest spoof hits 'ohm'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—As the people of Kazakhstan know all too well, mockery of culture and religion seems to be kosher in Hollywood, under the following conditions:

The humor must be so over-the-top, so beyond reality, that it could never be misconstrued as mean-spirited. That, and the targeted groups cannot be large enough, loud enough or organized enough so that their hurt feelings make an impact at the box office.

Just ask Borat. Though Kazakhs complained that their country and customs were grossly misrepresented in "Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan," the film was a \$128 million domestic success—among the top-grossing films of 2006.

In the context of Sacha Baron Cohen's uncomfortable in-character interactions with unwitting Americans, Mike Myers' parody of another cultural minority in the U.S.—as the over-



AP

In this image released by Paramount Pictures, Mike Myers is shown in a scene from "The Love Guru."

sexed, overly ambitious, American-born spiritual leader in the summer comedy "The Love Guru"—would hardly seem cause for complaint.

Myers' character is an amalgamation of Eastern-style spiritual movements, never making reference to any particular religion. And yet the Guru Pitka—billed as "the second best guru in India"—draws a distinct picture.

He wears long hair, a long beard and a flowing caftan. "Prepare to get your enlightenment freak on," Pitka tells visitors to his MySpace page, where he blends real informa-

tion—such as the Sanskrit origins of the word "guru"—with silliness, including impossible yoga poses that would require elastic limbs. He plays sappy pop songs on the sitar. His mantra is "Mariska Hargitay."

Pitka identifies himself as "a spiritual teacher affiliated with no one faith" and has the same crass-and-goofy charm as Myers' Austin Powers and "Wayne's World" characters. And the movie's plot—he heads West when he's offered \$2 million to heal a hockey star's romance so the team can win the Stanley Cup—is harmless enough.



Adam Sandler is seen in this Tuesday, March 20, 2007 file photo in New York.

Sandler breaks ankle playing basketball

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Adam Sandler broke his ankle over the weekend while playing basketball—but still won the game—according to a statement sent to The Associated Press from Sandler's representative.

Sandler, who starred in "Happy Gilmore" and "I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry," is currently shooting Walt Disney Pictures' "Bedtime Stories." In the film, due out later this year, Sandler plays as a hotel handyman whose bedtime stories magically come true. The statement said the injury will not affect production.

Ebert to resume writing movie reviews

CHICAGO (AP)—Roger Ebert will resume writing reviews later this month, but will not rejoin his syndicated TV show because he's still unable to speak.

In a letter published in Tuesday's Chicago Sun-Times, the Pulitzer Prize-winning film critic and co-host of TV's "Ebert & Roeper" said surgery in January ended in complications, and his ability to speak was not restored. He said the return of speech would require another surgery.

"But I still have all my other abilities, including the love of viewing movies and writing about them," Ebert said.

Ebert, 65, said he's looking forward to his annual film festival starting April 23.

"I will resume writing movie reviews shortly thereafter," he said.

Ebert, famous for his "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down" critiques, had surgery in 2006 to remove a cancerous growth on his salivary gland. He also had emergency surgery that year after a blood vessel burst near the site of the operation.

He had undergone cancer surgery three times before the 2006 operation—once in 2002 to remove a malignant tumor on his thyroid gland and twice on his salivary gland the following year.

Ebert said he remains cancer-free, and is not ready to think about more surgery.

"I should be content with the abundance I have," he said.

The 10th annual Ebertfest at the University of Illinois runs April 23-27. Ebert chose 13 films for the festival.

Winfrey dedicates show to her late dog

CHICAGO (AP)—Oprah Winfrey plans to dedicate a show investigating abuses at puppy mills to her cocker spaniel, Sophie, who died last month from kidney failure.

"Sophie gave me 13 years of unconditional love. She was a true love in my life," Winfrey says on the broadcast scheduled to air Friday. (Advance remarks from the show were released Tuesday by Harpo Productions.)

The show features special correspondent Lisa Ling investigating puppy mills, which Ling calls "horrific" and "haunting."

Winfrey says the show is "for anybody anywhere who loves a dog, has ever loved a dog, or just cares about their basic right to humane treatment."

While Sophie was not a product of a puppy mill, and Winfrey's three current dogs were adopted from breeders, Winfrey says in the future she would look to adopt from an animal shelter.

"I would never, ever adopt another pet now without going to a shelter to do it. I am a changed woman after seeing this show," she says.



Television personality and producer Oprah Winfrey is shown in this Jan. 9, 2008, file photo in New York.

McCain, Letterman spar on 'late Show'

NEW YORK (AP)—Republican presidential candidate John McCain good-naturedly sparred with David Letterman on Tuesday night's "Late Show." During his monologue, Letterman joked that the Arizona senator reminded him of "the guy at the hardware store who makes the keys" and "the guy who can't

stop talking about how well his tomatoes are doing."

After Letterman added that McCain looked like "the guy who points out the spots they missed at the car wash," the senator appeared on stage.

"You think that stuff's pretty funny, don't you?" McCain asked, then added: "Well,

you look like a guy whose laptop would be seized by the authorities."

McCain also said the host resembled the guy caught smuggling reptiles in his pants, to which Letterman replied, "Don't knock it if you haven't tried it."

The candidate also likened Letterman to the manager of a creepy motel, the guy who enjoys watching his swim trunks inflate in a hot tub and the guy about whom neighbors later say, "He mostly kept to himself."

Later in the show, the two discussed more serious issues, including the national credit crisis, Iraqi casualties, the U.S. prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Bear Stearns and accusations that McCain's not a true conservative Republican.

"I think maybe some people think that you ought to have exactly the same position they have on every issue," McCain said.

The two Democratic candidates have also appeared on the CBS show this year—Hillary Rodham Clinton in February, and Barack Obama in January.



Republican presidential candidate, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., speaks and takes questions from students at his alma mater, Episcopal High School, Tuesday, April 1, 2008, in Alexandria, Va.

Redford, others seek more arts funding

WASHINGTON (AP)—Actor Robert Redford and singer John Legend want funding restored for the National Endowment for the Arts and cultural programs.

Redford, Legend and actress Kerry Washington, who appeared in the movie "Ray," are joining arts advocates from

across the nation for Arts Advocacy Day in Congress.

In prepared testimony Tuesday, Redford said the arts are critical to economic development. The Academy Award-winning actor said his own Sundance Film Festival is a good example.

President Bush has proposed a \$16 million cut to the arts endowment budget for the 2009 fiscal year, to \$128 million from about \$145 million in 2008.

Arts advocates in Congress have been working to restore funding to its height \$176 million in 1992.

Daughter lauds mom's efforts to integrate multiple selves

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I was offended by your response to "True Love Texan" (Jan. 18) when he asked about loving a woman with multiple personality disorder. MPD is also known as Dissociative Identity Disorder. Individuals with DID have survived severe childhood abuse. The way they coped was to split into different personalities. DID can be treated through intense psychotherapy, which attempts to integrate the personalities into one.

A loving relationship IS possible with people who have DID. My mother is an example. She has DID due to extreme childhood ritual and sexual abuse. She's the most amazing and resilient woman I have ever known, and I am proud to be her daughter. My father has been married to her for 35 years and has supported her unconditionally. It can work!

Please educate your readers and provide some useful information about the courageous people who live with DID.

—PROUD OF MOM IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR PROUD OF MOM: I received a slew of mail about this. My response to "True Love Texan" was not meant to minimize the seriousness of Dissociative Identity Disorder. This man must understand what is involved before he makes a lifelong commitment.

The following responses offer personal insights meant to support him as well as provide information about this sensitive topic. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Telling that Texan to be certain that he loves every one of the multiple personalities may not be possible. However, it is possible to have a successful marriage with a person who has DID.

My husband and I will celebrate our 20th anniversary this summer, and he is a multiple. We knew about some of his personalities when we began dating, but others have surfaced as the years went on. It has not been easy, and I have had to deal with different folks coming out at awkward times. But as my husband said, "Your life will never be boring if you marry me," and he was right.

—WIFE TO ONE OF MANY IN VANCOUVER, WASH.

DEAR ABBY: I know from firsthand experiences that all the love, devotion and loyalty may never be enough when dealing with a person with DID. Instead of being a partner, spouse or equal, I became my wife's caregiver, peacemaker and sometimes a target.

Nothing was ever easy; I could not depend on anything going smoothly or without incident. More than once, my life and safety were seriously compromised. Finally, I became lost and overwhelmed by her illness.

After 13 years of turmoil and uncertainty, I had to leave. A serious illness gave me no choice but to take care of myself for a change.

I hope "True Love Texan" will heed the warnings of his friends and understand the gravity of this illness before he makes a lifetime commitment.

—WISER IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR ABBY: When a child is denied "normal" defenses and abused by those who are responsible for providing safety, some children do the most sane thing possible. They retreat into their own minds to a place of safety. We choose to call this by a new term, Multiple Personality Gift (MPG).

As long as the woman is in counseling, and "True Love Texan" is on board with the counseling, there is no reason they cannot have a good and productive life together. He needs to understand the abuse issues and be patient and gentle. Many people with MPG are highly intelligent and creative, with much to offer to those who are willing to open their minds and hearts.

—ADOPTIVE MOM IN NEW YORK

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Mexican money

5 Hits on the head

9 Tramcar load

12 Black-and-white treat

13 Con

14 Without further ado

15 Traveling

17 Calendar abbr.

18 Quit

19 Old number?

21 007's doctor foe

22 Pussy-cats' leader

24 Enthusiastic

27 Prickle

28 Sail support

31 B&B

32 Freudian subjects

33 Mamie's man

34 Hybrid pooch

36 Past

37 Overly proper

DOWN

1 Indigent

2 Sea eagle

3 Hardens

4 Pyrotechnics

5 Hay

6 "Sail — Ship of State!"

7 Bake sale

8 Factions

9 Broad-casting

10 Libertine

11 Basin

16 Swelled head

20 Allen or Burton

22 Arbitrate

23 Approximately

24 Pick a target

25 Wildebeest

26 Trying to avoid

27 Prejudice

29 Winter sport

30 President pro —

35 Afternoon affair

37 Confined

39 Fire indication

40 Travail

41 Robin

42 Laugh-a-minute

43 Climb, in a way

44 Top-notch

45 Doppel-ganger

46 Picnic hamperers

49 Bill

50 What 35-Down may be for?

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	L	M	A	S	O	W	S	H	A	G
G	A	I	N	C	H	A	T	O	P	E
H	O	L	D	F	A	S	T	E	L	S
A	S	S	E	R	T	E	V	A	D	E
B	A	H	E	E	L	N	E	W	S	Y
B	L	O	B	R	O	B	R	A	K	E
C	A	L	L	A	S	O	P	Y	I	N
P	R	O	S	I	T	T	O	U	P	E
L	A	V	S	H	O	L	D	B	A	C
O	R	E	O	E	N	E	A	C	R	E
P	E	R	M	L	O	G	S	T	U	D

Yesterday's answer 4-3

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Amanda Bynes, 22; Jennie Garth, 36; Eddie Murphy, 47; Alec Baldwin, 50

Happy Birthday: Refrain from sharing your ideas, thoughts and intentions this year. Just follow through with your plans drawing as little attention to yourself as possible. There will be plenty of red tape issues to deal with, especially if you let other people get involved. Act decisively but with discretion. Your numbers are 8, 11, 23, 31, 34, 49

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will be tempted to jump into projects without doing enough research. Too much, too fast will be your downfall. Now is the time to reflect and reorganize, not the time to barrel ahead without regard for consequences. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Emotional awareness will help you deal with people you need on your side. You will be offered help even if you only reveal what's absolutely necessary so don't be too open about your plans. Love is on the rise. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't give in to pressure. You can only do what's humanly possible and letting someone make you feel guilty or ineffectual will cause a rift. Concentrate on what you can do and give it your own unique little twist. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A good deal or chance to do something different is there for the taking. You will have a fight on your hands if you don't take action, step up and move quickly. There is too much at stake to hesitate. *****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Think about travel and gaining experience and hooking up with someone who may be able to alter your life favorably. Money matters must be kept to a minimum until you sort through your expenses and know how much you have left to play with. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't be afraid to talk about love, feelings and future intentions with someone you care about. A great adventure can easily be turned into a reality. A series of events will lead to a serious and long-lasting relationship that will favorably influence your future. ****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Push ahead with your vocational goals. You can make your point clear without getting too aggressive. A mild-mannered approach to what you want will get the job done and the approval you need to move forward. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Consider making a move if it will allow you to take advantage of something you want to pursue. Your momentum is high so don't stop to take a break. The more you fit into your day, the better. *****


SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't fabricate a situation. Everyone will quickly figure out what you are trying to do, so keep things on the straight and narrow. Being the center of attention may be nice but at what and whose expense is the question. **

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Love is on the rise and special plans to impress

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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someone will do just that. A money deal is looking good and should allow you the freedom you need to raise your personal status. Remembering the past will bring you closer to doing the things you enjoy. ****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Hold back if you aren't sure how you feel. Giving someone the wrong impression will cause you stress and worry. You have to do things a little differently if you want people to realize your potential. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't divulge secrets, especially if it will influence your financial security. Letting your emotions take over will cause mistakes. Don't get angry, get busy doing whatever it takes to make you a valuable asset. ***

Birthday Baby: You are aggressive and passionate and care about what happens to everyone around you. You are a charmer and a helpful friend. You take action and get the job done.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13					14	
15				16					17	
18							19	20		
			21		22	23				
24	25	26			27			28	29	30
31					32				33	
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41	42					43			44	45
47				48	49	50				
51				52				53		
54				55				56		

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

					7			
	6	8			2	5		
	3		8		5		4	
			5			1	9	3
9	8	3				4		
	4		9		3		2	
		9	4			6	7	
			1					

Difficulty Level ★★★ 4/03
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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	2	8	4	1	3	6	7	9
9	7	3	8	6	2	4	1	5
6	1	4	5	7	9	3	2	8
7	5	2	1	3	8	9	6	4
8	4	9	2	5	6	7	3	1
1	3	6	7	9	4	8	5	2
2	6	7	9	8	1	5	4	3
4	9	5	3	2	7	1	8	6
3	8	1	6	4	5	2	9	7

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY**. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

PEKING DUCK Solution: 8 letters

N	H	S	P	S	E	H	S	I	N	R	A	G	R	W
N	O	I	T	R	O	P	T	H	G	I	L	E	D	R
E	I	I	B	E	I	J	I	N	G	A	T	D	E	A
D	S	S	T	C	A	Z	D	B	Z	A	O	S	S	P
L	I	E	E	A	E	M	E	E	W	O	T	O	L	P
O	N	S	S	E	R	V	E	D	F	A	E	A	I	E
G	I	S	W	S	U	A	D	D	U	F	C	K	C	D
I	R	A	I	T	T	A	P	R	S	A	U	C	E	R
N	A	L	N	A	X	Ⓐ	E	I	Y	T	T	S	E	
G	D	O	E	E	E	N	Ⓛ	K	R	B	T	R	S	D
E	N	M	C	M	T	S	A	Ⓢ	R	P	E	S	R	N
R	A	G	R	E	A	S	E	O	Ⓟ	D	L	Y	A	E
R	M	N	I	H	T	R	T	C	W	N	I	K	S	T
B	U	N	S	B	E	H	A	O	N	I	O	N	S	
C	U	E	P	P	M	U	P	C	G	A	R	L	I	C

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Beijing, Bird, Boil, Broth, Buns, Caramel, Cook, Crisp, Delight, Drying, Food, Garlic, Garnishes, Ginger, Glaze, Golden, Grease, Hoisin, Lettuce, Mandarin, Meats, Molasses, Onions, Portion, Powder, Preparation, Prized, Pump, Restaurant, Roast, Sauce, Served, Skin, Slices, Soak, Spices, Steamed, Stuffed, Tasty, Tender, Texture, Thin, Water, Wine, Wrapped

Yesterday's Answer: Guidelines

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facility. Beach Road, Chalan Lau Lau
behind Hakubotan. \$400/mo. Tel:483-1974

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 POWER PLANT MECHANIC (TTH 0043)
Salary:\$3.55-\$6.25/hour. Benefits:
Self arranged housing; self provided
food; company provided medical &
worker's compensation insurance.
Contact: Pacific Marine & Industrial
Corporation @322-6181.

1 POWERHOUSE MECHANIC (TTH 0044)
Salary:\$3.55-\$5.12/hour. Benefits:
Self arranged housing; self provided
food; company provided medical &
worker's compensation insurance.
Contact: Pacific Marine & Industrial
Corporation @322-6181.

1 AUTO MECHANIC (THS 0054)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medi-
cal expense & workman compensa-
tion. Contact: Nicolas M. Solomon,
Jr. dba Advance Auto Center @
233-2288.

1 COOK (THS 0055)
Salary:\$4.25/hour. Benefits:\$100.00
food; medical expense & workman
compensation. Contact: Auntie
Mag's Food and Catering dba Auntie
Mag's Catering @ 288-4799.

1 FOOD SERVER (THS 0056)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits:
\$100.00 food; medical expense &
workman compensation. Contact:
Auntie Mag's Food and Catering
dba Auntie Mag's Catering @
288-4799.

1 SENIOR AUDITOR (TTH 0045)
Salary:\$2,000.00-\$3,700.00/
monthly. Benefits: Self arranged
housing; self provided food; health
insurance; workers compensation;

WHATZIT Solution:
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of company); transportation self
provided; paid vacation & sick leave.
Contact: Ernst & Young (CNMI), Inc.
@234-8300.

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Contact Lina @ 234 6533
Email Resumes to linachavez05@hotmail.com

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

GEORGE N. RIOS,	FCD DI CIVIL ACTION NO. 03-0123(B)
Petitioner,	
versus	
MARIANA S. RIOS,	ORDER
Respondent.	

Petitioner, George N. Rios
has petitioned this Court for an Order
to Appear and Plead on his
Complaint for Divorce.

Petitioner shall publish the
Summons once a week for four (4)
consecutive weeks in a local
newspaper of general circulation the
Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands. Petitioner shall post
the Summons at the House of Justice
bulletin board on Saipan for a period
of not less than thirty (30) days.

IT SO ORDERED this 14th
day of April, 2004.

/s/ KENNETH L. GOVENDO
Associate Judge

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

REBECCA C. WHITE	: CIVIL
Plaintiff.	: ACTION
-v-	: NO. 07-412
	:
SOOK IN HAM and DONG KYU LEE,	:
Defendants.	:

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED
DEFENDANTS:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED
and notified to file any answer you wish
to make to the Complaint, a copy of which
is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one
(21) days after the fourth publication of this
Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of
your answer to the Law Offices of Michael
A. White, LLC, the Plaintiff's Attorneys,
whose address is P.O. Box 5222, Saipan, MP
96950, as soon as practicable after filing
your answer or sending it to the Clerk of
Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and
filed with the Clerk of this Court as Susupe,
Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for
you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of
this Court by messenger or mail. It is not
necessary for you to appear personally until
further notice. If you fail to answer in
accordance with this Summons, judgment by
default may be taken against you for the
relief demanded in the Complaint.

By order of the above court:

/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

DATED, this 25th day of March, 2008:

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

INVITATION TO BID
ITB No.: ITB08-DLNR/FW-054

OPENING DATE: APRIL 15, 2008 **TIME: 10:00 A.M.**

**“TO FABRICATE TEN (10) FISH
AGGREGATING DEVICES (FAD) FOR THE
DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE”**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATION MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE
DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWER BASE DR.,
SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS
FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH
THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ DR. IGNACIO T. DELA CRUZ, D.V.M. /s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
SECRETARY, DLNR DIRECTOR, P&S

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lished on either Sunday or Monday issues.

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Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to
date of publication.

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Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and
to revise copy when necessary.

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235-NEWS

Stojakovic hits late 3, lifts Hornets past Magic



ORLANDO, Florida (AP)—Peja Stojakovic hit a 3-pointer and three free throws in the final minute to lift the New Orleans Hornets over the Orlando Magic 98-97 in the NBA on Tuesday.

Chris Paul had 19 points and 12 assists for the Hornets, and David West had 18 points and 11 rebounds.

Hedo Turkoglu had 26 points, seven assists and five rebounds for Orlando. Rashard Lewis added 24 points and Dwight Howard had 17 points and 15 rebounds.

Spurs 116, Warriors 92

At San Antonio, Tony Parker scored 26 points to lead San Antonio over Golden State for its eighth straight win.

The defending champions remained second in the Western Conference, just percentage points behind New Orleans. Golden State, in a three-way race with Dallas and Denver for the final two playoff spots, dropped their 20th straight in San Antonio since the Spurs drafted Tim Duncan in 1997.

Duncan added 17 points and 12 rebounds and Manu Ginobili, the other member of the Spurs' Big Three, scored 16 points.

Baron Davis led the Warriors with 19 points.

Nuggets 126, Suns 120

At Denver, Carmelo Anthony grabbed two key rebounds and sank two free throws in the final 27 seconds, sending Denver past Phoenix.

The Nuggets pulled into eighth place in the ultra-competitive Western Conference playoff race, a half-game ahead of Golden State, which lost at San Antonio 116-92 Tuesday.

And they denied the Suns a chance to move into first place by themselves in the Pacific Division over the idle Los Angeles Lakers.

Denver got 31 points from Allen Iverson in avenging a loss at Phoenix 24 hours earlier in which the Nuggets blew a 22-point, second-half lead in a 132-117 loss on Monday night.

Kings 99, Rockets 98

At Sacramento, California, Ron Artest scored 30 points, Kevin Martin added 27 and Sacramento dealt a blow to Houston's chances of winning the Southwest Division.

The Rockets (49-25) fell 2 1/2 games behind New Orleans and San Antonio in the division race with only eight games remaining, hurting their chances of hosting a first-round playoff series.



New Orleans Hornets forward Peja Stojakovic (16), of Serbia, works his way around Orlando Magic guard Keith Bogans to get position for a shot during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Orlando, Fla., Tuesday, April 1, 2008.

Tracy McGrady scored 32 to lead Houston, but missed a jumper at the buzzer that would have won it. The Rockets have lost five of eight since a franchise-record, 22-game winning streak.

76ers 108, Nets 99

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Lou Williams hit three consecutive baskets in the final 3:47, and surprising Philadelphia posted its 20th win in 27 games with a victory over fading New Jersey.

Andre Miller had 24 points and 11 assists, while Andre Iguodala added 17 points and 10 assists for Philadelphia. Samuel Dalembert added 15 points and 13 rebounds.

The Nets' third straight loss dropped them 3 1/2 games behind Atlanta for the final playoff spot in the conference. Vince Carter led with 29 points.

Celtics 106, Bulls 92

At Chicago, Ray Allen scored 22 points and Boston moved a step closer to the top seed in the Eastern Conference by beating Chicago.

Kevin Garnett scored 20 points and blocked four shots and Paul Pierce added 17 points for Boston, which won its fourth straight and remained six games ahead of Detroit in the conference standings.

Chicago continued to fade from the playoff picture, despite getting a season-high 24 points from Tyrus Thomas. With eight games left, the 11th-place Bulls trail Atlanta by five and have to climb over New Jersey and Indiana to make their fourth straight postseason appearance.

Pistons 94, Timberwolves 90

At Minneapolis, in the absence of stars Chauncey Billups, Rasheed Wallace and

Richard Hamilton who were resting up for the playoffs, rookie Rodney Stuckey scored a career-high 27 points to help Detroit overcome a 21-point deficit and beat Minnesota.

Minnesota's Al Jefferson had 26 points but managed only 12 shots while being hounded by double- and triple-teams.

Bucks 119, Knicks 115, OT

At Milwaukee, Michael Redd finished with 36 points and Bobby Simmons added a season-high 24 in Milwaukee's overtime victory over New York.

Andrew Bogut, who missed the last two games because of a broken nose, chipped in with 24 points and 13 rebounds for Milwaukee. The Bucks snapped a four-game losing streak.

Quentin Richardson scored 22 points as the Knicks lost their fifth straight road game.

Knicks set to announce Donnie Walsh hiring

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Knicks will turn their basketball operations over to Donnie Walsh on Wednesday.

The Knicks will announce the hiring of Walsh as their new president at a news conference, a person with knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the move has not been made official yet. The press conference is at 1 p.m. at Madison Square Garden.

Walsh, the longtime Indiana Pacers executive, will replace Isiah Thomas as president. Thomas is also the Knicks' coach.

Thomas' future remains unclear. He has repeatedly said he expects to be with the Knicks next season, but that likely

will be up to Walsh—who hired Thomas to coach the Pacers in 2000.

The Knicks fell to 20-54 with a 119-115 overtime loss at Milwaukee on Tuesday. They continue their five-game road trip Wednesday at Memphis.

Word of Walsh's hiring came long after the loss to the Bucks, but Thomas was asked following the game if he would have any regrets if his tenure as coach was ending.

"No, I look back and I look at what we started with and where we're going and I think we have a very bright future," Thomas said.

Walsh recently announced he was leaving the Pacers after 24 years with the organization. He joined the Pacers' front office

as general manager in 1986, became team president in 1988 and CEO in 2003. He helped the franchise rise from NBA laughingstock to title contender.

Indiana reached the Eastern Conference finals six times and won the Central Division four times during Walsh's stay as an executive. The Pacers reached the NBA finals in 2000, when they lost to the Los Angeles Lakers, and had the league's best record in 2004.

"I've often, when I needed some basketball advice, he's on a short list of people that I pick up the phone and call around the league for just basketball matters," NBA commissioner David Stern said last week. "And he works and works and works."

Walsh has had a lesser role in recent

years since the Pacers hired Larry Bird as their president in 2003. Walsh had previously said he wouldn't reveal any plans about his future until after the season.

The Knicks haven't won a playoff game since Thomas arrived as president in December 2003 and could be headed for the first 60-loss season in franchise history. Still, Madison Square Garden chairman James Dolan has remained loyal to Thomas, though he has not spoken to the media since rewarding him with a multi-year contract extension last March.

Reports surfaced late last month that Dolan had preliminary talks with Walsh. Negotiations moved quickly, with the Knicks apparently not even interviewing anyone else for the job.

Gordon to play for British hoops team

LONDON (AP)Chicago Bulls guard Ben Gordon is the latest NBA player to be selected to the fledgling British basketball team that's trying to qualify for the 2012 Olympics.

Gordon, who turns 25 on April 4, moved to the United States shortly after he was born in London.

The former Connecticut star was drafted by the Bulls in the first round in 2004. He was one of two Bulls players to appear in all 82 games last season, averaging 21.4 points.

British Basketball named Gordon and Bulls teammate Luol Deng to its 33-man squad Tuesday to play in Eurobasket qualifiers.

"He has been very positive about playing and we are going to meet with him again in Chicago within the next two weeks," British Basketball performance manager Ron Wuotila said of Gordon.

"The prospects are bright for our senior teams this summer due to the talent included on these squad lists. There are a number of younger players on the list who can contribute in the near term and are embarking on a 10-to-15-year career that will ideally include years of British representation."

Deng made his competitive debut for Britain in August 2007. The 22-year-old Sudanese native moved to London as a child to escape the conflict in his homeland.

Between 15 and 20 British players will be invited to a training camp in May or June to prepare for September's EuroBasket qualifiers against Israel, Czech Republic and Bosnia.

The winner of that group will qualify for the 2009 European Championship in Poland. Basketball's world governing body, FIBA, has ruled that a British team must qualify for the 2009 or 2011 Europeans in order to play at the 2012 Olympics.

England, Wales and Scotland compete individually at world championships and Commonwealth Games, but are part of a combined Britain team for the Olympics.

Other American-based players on the roster are forward Kieron Achara from Duquesne; center Andy Betts from Arizona State; forward Matthew Bryan-Amaning from Washington; forward Dante Cunningham from Villanova; forward Ben Eaves from Rhode Island; guard Paul Guede from Tallahassee Community College; guard Matt Guymon from Oklahoma City University; guard Justin Robinson from Rider; and forward Shane Walker from Maryland.

The British women's 27-player squad includes former WNBA player Megan Moody and eight players who are playing for U.S. colleges.

Yankees beat Blue Jays in final opener at Stadium



NEW YORK
(AP)—Wang Chien-ming shut down the Toronto

Blue Jays for seven innings, making Joe Girardi a winner in his rain-delayed debut as Yankees manager and sending New York to a record-setting 3-2 victory on Tuesday.

After wet weather postponed the festivities on Monday, New York beat Roy Halladay (0-1) to win its major league-best 11th consecutive home opener—the 84th and last at Yankee Stadium.

Melky Cabrera homered and made two outstanding catches in center field. Alex Rodriguez scored on Hideki Matsui's grounder in the seventh, breaking a 2-all tie.

Wang (1-0) got the win. Mariano Rivera worked a perfect ninth for the save.

Angels 9, Twins 1.

At Minneapolis, Vladimir Guerrero and Garret Anderson combined for six hits and five RBIs, and Jon Garland breezed through his first start for Los Angeles.

Torii Hunter had another 0-for-4 night for the Angels against his old team, reaching base only when a ninth-inning pitch from Juan Rincon banged off his elbow.

Garland (1-0) went eight innings and gave up just six hits and one walk.

Boof Bonser (0-1) took the loss.

Red Sox 2, Athletics 1

At Oakland, California, Daisuke Matsuzaka struck out nine and didn't walk a batter, allowing two hits and one run over 6 2-3 innings as Boston spoiled Oakland's home opener.

Kevin Youkilis went 3-for-4 with a triple and scored twice as these two clubs resumed a season-opening series that began with a split in Tokyo last week. Youkilis hit a two-out triple off the left-field wall in the sixth, then scored on Jason Varitek's double off Joe Blanton (0-1).

Varitek's hit landed above the yellow line on top of the out-of-town scoreboard in right before bouncing back onto the field. Umpires met to discuss it, and the play stood as a double.

Jack Cust hit a solo home run leading off the second for the only score against Matsuzaka (1-0). Jonathan Papelbon recorded the final four outs for his second save, striking out the side in the ninth.

Rangers 5, Mariners 4

At Seattle, Josh Hamilton hit a two-run homer in the ninth off All-Star closer J.J. Putz to lift Texas over Seattle.

Putz (0-1) dropped his head after Hamilton connected on his first-pitch, 93 mph fastball with one out. Putz blew his first save in his second game of the season. He didn't blow his first last season until July 25 at Texas.

Hamilton had hits in each of Texas' last two rallies—one that broke a 1-1 tie in the eighth and one led by his homer that erased a 4-3 deficit.

Joaquin Benoit (1-0) relieved with a 3-1 lead in the eighth but Seattle went ahead on an RBI single by Yuniesky Betancourt, who had four hits, an RBI grounder by Ichiro Suzuki that second baseman Ian Kinsler misplayed for an error and a run-scoring wild pitch.

Betancourt doubled with two outs in the ninth off C.J. Wilson. But

Wilson earned his first save by retiring Suzuki, who had three hits, on a game-ending groundout.

Marlins 5, Mets 4

At Miami, New York's Pedro Martinez left early with a leg injury, and Robert Andino's first career home run with two outs in the 10th inning gave the Florida Marlins a win over the Mets.

Already coming off two injury-plagued seasons, Martinez strained his

left hamstring in the fourth inning, after just 57 pitches.

The Mets bullpen more than picked up the slack in Martinez's absence, until Andino—who had just six extra-base hits in his first 81 major league at-bats—homered to left field off Matt Wise (0-1), the sixth Mets pitcher.

Justin Miller (1-0) allowed Brian Schneider's third hit of the game in the 10th, but retired Endy Chavez and Jose Reyes on flyouts to strand him there.

Rockies 2, Cardinals 1

At St. Louis, third baseman Troy Glaus' throwing error allowed the tying run to score and Jayson Nix walked with the bases loaded in a two-run eighth as Colorado began the defense of its NL pennant.

Cardinals castoff Kip Wells pitched into the sixth in his second career opening-day start, Taylor Buchholz (1-0) had a scoreless seventh and Manny Corpas threw a perfect ninth for the save.

Kyle Lohse allowed three hits in

five scoreless innings for St. Louis and Yadier Molina homered. Ryan Franklin (0-1) was the loser.

Padres 2, Astros 1

At San Diego, Trevor Hoffman earned his 525th career save, pitching the ninth inning in San Diego's win over Houston.

As is usual with the 40-year-old Hoffman, it wasn't without some drama. Hunter Pence beat out an infield single before Hoffman struck out Lance Berkman to end the game.

Scott Hairston hit a two-run run homer to carry Chris Young (1-0) and the Padres to their second straight victory. Hairston's 393-foot drive on a 2-1 pitch from Brandon Backe (0-1) reached the second deck in left field with one out in the fourth. Kevin Kouzmanoff was aboard on a leadoff single.

San Diego's Khalil Greene went 3-for-4 and has five hits in two games.

Dodgers 3, Giants 2

At Los Angeles, Rafael Furcal scored from second on pinch hitter Delwyn Young's infield hit with two outs in the ninth to lift Los Angeles past San Francisco.

Furcal hit a one-out single off Keiichi Yabu (0-1) and Russell Martin walked before Andre Ethier struck out. Young, batting for winning pitcher Tasaki Saito, followed by grounding a 2-2 pitch between first and second. Ray Durham made a sliding stop, but his throw to first was too late. Furcal never stopped, and slid around the tag of catcher Benjie Molina to beat first baseman Rich Aurilia's throw home.

Saito (1-0) struck out the side in the top of the ninth to earn the victory. Los Angeles started a season with two victories for the first time since 2000.



New York Yankees manager Joe Girardi, left, greets Hideki Matsui, right, of Japan, in the Yankees' home opener against the Toronto Blue Jays at Yankee Stadium in New York, Tuesday, April 1, 2008.

Belichick: No more to come on Spygate



PALM BEACH, Fla.
(AP)—Bill Belichick insists there are no new revelations to come about Spygate. "I think they've addressed everything they possibly can address," the New England Patriots coach said Tuesday.

Belichick, speaking during the AFC coaches breakfast at the NFL meetings, said he was interviewed again after the Super Bowl about allegations that former team employee Matt Walsh had illegal tapes. Those tapes presumably included a walkthrough by the St. Louis Rams on the day before the 2002 Super Bowl, a game the Patriots won.

"I've addressed so many questions so many times from so many people I don't know what else the league could ask," Belichick said.

Commissioner Roger Goodell confirmed that the NFL spoke again with Belichick and other Patriots employees after last January's Super Bowl loss to the New York Giants. The league has been negotiating an agreement with Walsh that it hopes will get Walsh, a golf pro in Hawaii, to come forward with what he has.

"We followed up on other things

because certain things had been tossed out," Goodell said of the added round of interviews with Belichick and other members of the Patriots front office.

Belichick and Patriots owner Robert Kraft later addressed the owners later Tuesday, promising that Spygate was behind them.

While participants didn't discuss the specifics, Indianapolis coach Tony Dungy said: "I appreciated what he had to say."

His was the first time anyone disclosed that Belichick and other Patriots staffers were reinterviewed after the Super Bowl, when the Walsh allegations surfaced. The first interviews actually came the day before the Super Bowl with player personnel director Scott Pioli; Stacey James, the team's vice president for media relations; and video director Jimmy Dee.

League officials subsequently interviewed Kraft and Belichick, as he disclosed on Tuesday. "I talked to four or five people," Belichick said, although he did not say if it was in person or by telephone.

Spygate developed after the first game of the season, when tapes of the New York Jets' defensive signals were con-

fiscated from a Patriots employee on the sideline. Belichick was fined \$500,000, the team was fined \$250,000 and was stripped of its first-round draft choice.

The Patriots ended up becoming the first team to finish the regular season 16-0. They won two playoff games, but were upset 17-14 in the Super Bowl by the Giants.

The Walsh allegations came out two days before that title game, although Belichick said they weren't a distraction in the game. And he vehemently denied the Patriots taped a Rams walkthrough before that 2002 Super Bowl, which the two-touchdown underdog Patriots won 20-17.

"I've never seen a tape of another team's practice. Ever!" he said Tuesday. "Certainly not that one."

But Spygate hasn't gone away.

Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., got himself involved, met with Goodell, and suggested the Patriots might have taped the Philadelphia Eagles before the 2005 Super Bowl. New England won that game 24-21.

Specter also questioned why the tapes confiscated from the Jets game were destroyed after the Patriots were penalized. The league said there was no

reason to keep them.

In addition, Walsh, through his lawyer, Michael Levy, has been negotiating with the NFL for legal protection if he comes forward to tell what he knows. Levy and the league reported three weeks ago that they were close to an agreement to do that, but talks have been sporadic since.

Belichick insisted Tuesday that nothing will be disclosed on any new tapes. "I barely knew Matt Walsh," he said. "He was hired before I became the coach."

He conceded he should have contacted Ray Anderson, the NFL's vice president for football operations, after a memo from Anderson in 2006 that laid down the specifications for intelligence gathering.

"What I should have done ... I should have called the league and asked for a clarification," he said. "That was my mistake."

He said that in one respect, Spygate did the Patriots a favor.

"We've taken it as a positive and reorganized our operations to make sure a situation like this never comes up again," he said. "Our operation is more efficient, more streamlined. Look at the results of this season. That would confirm it."

Trench Tech pushes back two events

By JON PEREZ

jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

TRENCH TECH

Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym co-instructor Cuki Alvarez would like to inform mixed martial arts fans that they are pushing back two of their events scheduled this month to May.

Alvarez said they decided to push back the events to give them more time to arrange an renovate Trench Tech Gym's new home. Trench Tech has relocated from the gym behind Moylan's Insurance in Garapan to Afetnas Square behind the Department of Labor building in San Antonio.

The Art Of War II All Island Grappling/Submission event scheduled on April 26, Saturday, was moved to May 10, while Trench Warz VII set for June 7 will now take place on June 21.

Both events will now be held at their new air-conditioned gym in Afetnas Square, which is also known as Babauta Estates. Trench Tech's new gym is a 15,708-sq. ft facility that can accommodate up to 2,000 fans.

Aside from giving the Trench



Participants in last year's Art of War grappling event try to outsmart each other in this file photo. Two Trench Tech-organized events are pushed back to give Cuki Alvarez and his crew some time to fix their new facility in San Antonio.

Tech crew ample time to fix the new venue, Alvarez said MMA fans from Saipan who are working and living overseas requested to change the dates so they can return home for summer.

Applications to join both competitions will soon be available at the Trench Tech gym. Enrolment and sign up fee for all who wish to join will be announced at a later date.

nounced at a later date.

The tentative fight card for Trench Warz VIII will be Jason "Rush" Tarkong against Myron "The Natural" San Nicolas in the main event while Guam's Jess "The Spyderman" Taitano will fight against Saipan's pride in the 125-lb division "Tabby" Jay Muna in the semi main event.

Ryan "The Dentist" Urquiza is also expected to fight, while an undercard boxing match between the Philippines' Bert Cano and a still unnamed opponent is also in the works.

Alvarez, who aims to bring top caliber fight events on the island, also promised 10 more undercard matches featuring Saipan's and Guam's top fighters.

NMASA set for monthly meeting tonight



The Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association will hold its regular monthly meeting today, April 3, 7pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium conference room.

As always, NMASA member associations will vote for the best athletes for the previous month (March) in four categories (male, female, male student, and female student).

NMASA reminds associations that will be nominating their athletes to submit written nominations in multiple copies to be distributed to members during the meeting.

According to NMASA president Michael A. White, among the topics also set to be discussed during the meeting will be the CNMI's participation in the 2009 Pacific Mini Games in the Cook Islands.

Cook Islands recently announced that 15 sports featured in the 2009 edition of the quadrennial Games. The 15 sports are up from the 12 offered during the VII Pacific Mini Games held in Koror, Palau in 2005.

Athletics, table tennis, triathlon, va'a or outrigger canoeing, and weightlifting, bodybuilding, boxing, lawn bowls, rugby league, and touch rugby are the sports lined up for the 2009 Cook Islands Pacific Mini Games.

White earlier said the CNMI

could possibly send athletes in six of the sports, namely athletics, golf, table tennis, triathlon, sailing, and va'a or outrigger canoeing.

White said he is advising all six sports federations to start preparing for the 2009 Pacific Mini Games.

"The cost of participation is \$3,200 per person, about the same in what we budgeted [going] to Samoa. Now is the time to start getting organized and raising funds." (Mark Rabago)

NEPAIAL

From Page 28

them a final tally of 69.8.

Second place went to the team of Faye Crozat, Randy Feenel, Richard Jones, and Kazuyo Tojo with a low gross score of 64 and a net of 70.0.

The husband-and-wife tandems of Tim and Doy Brassuel and Greg and Ni Koebel ended up in third with a low gross score of 63 and a 70.2 net.

The foursome of Jeff Taylor, Mark Moss, Jim Gabhart, and Rick Kautz actually had the lowest low gross score with a 59 but finished with a 70.20 in the double Peoria format.

The trio of Brett Nelson, Laurant Weiner, and Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Jim Arenovski was the last place team to win the Grand Salami award.

They had the highest low gross score of 67 and a net 73 to literally win a 19-inch salami

imported from the mainland.

Kautz and chief public defender Adam Hardwicke had the longest drives for the day, winning it in holes No. 18 and 9.

The closest to the pin winners were Mark Blackburn in hole No. 4, Taylor in hole No. 6, Arenovski in hole No. 11 and Doy Brassuel in hole No. 15.

It was the 11th edition of the Tournament of Fools but this year was a tribute to Hughes, who died in an accident last month in Thailand. The tour-

nament was traditionally a customer appreciation event.

The Inaugural Dan Hughes Memorial Tournament of Fools Golf Tournament adopted a four-person best-ball format.

A dinner and awards banquet were held at Coffee Care in Capital Hill where participants and Hughes' friends gathered to honor the longtime Saipan resident.

Hughes' wife, Miya, of Sea-Shell Pink Boutique, made the yellow Hawaiian jacket.

JR. NETTERS

From Page 28

Theecel, who scored a 6-2, 6-0 triumph over eight-year-old Neghar Rastguay in the girls' 13-and-under; Matty Buenaventura in the women's 4.0 after a 6-2, 6-1 victory against Lydia Tan.

Ji Hoon Heo, who will leave for South Korea today to join two International Tennis Federation junior events, completed his title defense in the men's

open with a clinical 6-3, 6-3 drubbing of Peter Loyola.

Heo will join the Lee Duk Hee Korean International Junior Championships and the Jeju International Junior Championships. Both events are ITF Junior tournaments that could earn him the needed points to barge in the world junior rankings.

The PIC Gatorade championship continues this weekend from April 4 to 6 with games in the men's, women's, and mixed

doubles events.

The men's doubles will have matches offered in the Open, 4.0, and 3.0 division, while the women's will have the open and 3.0 titles at stake. The mixed doubles will offer the open and 4.0 crowns.

Cash prizes are also guaranteed in the winners and finalists of the men's, women's, and mixed doubles events, while other winners and finalists in the other categories will receive prizes donated by various sponsors of the six-day, two-week-end tournament.

PIC, Pacific Trading Co., Stay Well Insurance, and Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino are some of the sponsors of the tournament.

For more information about the 2008 Pacific Islands Club-Gatorade Tennis Championships, call John Waechter or Sergei Bargamotov at PIC at 235-6231 ext 5147 or email at sportsmanager@picsaipan.com or seasent@picsaipan.com.

Parada fits Red Bull to a T

MANILA, Philippines—Yeng Guiao is convinced that they have found the solution to the rebounding woes that has become their major concern last conference.

It took just 43 minutes for the Red Bull coach to establish that Adam Parada is indeed their man in the middle.

As a matter of fact, in heap-praises for the 27-year-old, 265-lb. gentle giant, Guiao effectively indicated that the club is sticking it out with their 7-foot reinforcement for the duration of the 2008 Smart PBA Fiesta Conference.

"He's not a flashy, spectacular import. But he's effective, terribly effective import. And he plugs the hole in the doughnut," Guiao said.

It's hard not to agree with Guiao especially after watching Parada—a mainstay of Mexico's national team—dish out an eye-popping performance in his debut Sunday that drew the at-

tention of jaded observers.

Parada registered 28 points and 21 rebounds and had five blocks in his debut as the Barakos dealt the Barangay Ginebra Kings an 89-83 decision.

"We're not expecting such a good game from Adam, Guiao confessed. "We knew he was a big, smart and effective big man. But he proved he's a winner," Guiao observed.

"He makes good decisions. He doesn't take bad shots and he works hard off the boards. That's exactly what we need because rebounding has become our weakest stat since the last conference"

The former stalwart of the University of California-Irvine went 10-of-18 from the field and made 8-of-11 free throws in a decent display of his offensive skills. He capped his awesome act by completing a three-point play that gave the Barakos a comfortable 85-81 lead with 1:44 remaining. (www.pba.com.ph)



Red Bull's Adam Parada in action against Barangay Ginebra's Rashon Turner last Sunday in their game in the 2008 Smart PBA Fiesta Conference.

PTI

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M. Palacios Baseball Field for the Junior League, the Kagman Lion Hearts of Reps. Ed Salas and Rosmond Santos snapped the Jets' seven-game winning run.

The Lion Hearts scored a 6-4 win over the Jets, which is

backed by Juan S. Tenorio and Pacific Amusement.

Before Wednesday night's win, the Claudia Leon Guerrero-managed Lion Hearts lost twice to the Darren Flores-mentored squad.

The Majors division match between the Bank of Saipan Red Sox and Tan Holdings Athletics was being played at press time.

VILLAFRIA

From Page 28

NMA, Villafria will also ask the help of the Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Federation and its president Russ Quinn.

He said he expects all running enthusiasts on Saipan, who regularly join various races on the island, and NMA athletes will also take part in his five-kilometer fun run.

The Mt. Fuji Marathon or Fuji Tozan Race is composed of two legs, a 15-kilometer race to the fifth station of the mountain and a 21-km race all the way to the top. The final six-kilometers of the race is also a trail run.

Villafria said lawyer and perennial contender Steven Pixley would join him in the Mt. Fuji Marathon, while inaugural 12-kilometer Marianas Coffee Trail

Run at Mt. Tapochao winner Fujio Miyachi will also compete for the third time in the race.

Registration for the Mt. Fuji race is limited to only 6,000 participants and sign up is on a first-come, first-served basis. Villafria said Pixley would take care of their registration.

Villafria previously led an All-Filipino team in winning the relay event of the 19th Tagaman Triathlon on March 15 where he ran the 15-km course in 58 minutes and 33 seconds and beat Miyachi in the 12-km trail run of the 7th XTERRA Saipan Championships with a time of 1:01:12.

He also placed third in the 10-km event of the 3rd Annual Saipan Marathon in January (41:43.22) and ran solo in the 13.7-mile Christmas Island Relay last year with a time 1:48:50.



Trench Tech pushes back two events

Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym co-instructor Cuki Alvarez would like to inform mixed martial arts fans that they are pushing back two of their events scheduled this month to May.

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Stojakovic hits late 3, lifts Hornets past Magic

Peja Stojakovic hit a 3-pointer and three free throws in the final minute to lift the New Orleans Hornets over the Orlando Magic 98-97 in the NBA on Tuesday.



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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

PTI Dolphins drench Shell Suns

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Frankie Blas pitched four innings of one-hit game to help the PTI Dolphins swim past the Shell Marianas Suns, 11-1, in Wednesday's Majors division game in the Saipan Little League at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.

Blas won the pitching battle against Paul Celis as he held the Suns to one hit—on a Perry Celis third-inning single. He also had seven strikeouts and two walks to secure the Dolphins' fifth win against two defeats.

Jarred Arriola and DJ Smith led the Dolphins attack combining for 4-for-4 with two runs. Arriola also had an RBI.

Esiah Cruz went 2-for-3 with two runs and a double, while Roque Camacho went 1-for-2 with one run and two RBIs.

The Dolphins also used a six-run, second-inning attack in handing the Suns their sixth straight loss in as many games.

Paul Celis got the loss after pitching four innings, which was shortened by the 10-run mercy rule. He gave up six earned runs on 11 hits with five strikeouts and one walk.

Celis was doing great for 1 1/2 innings as he matched Blas' every pitch, but lost control of the game midway in the second inning where the Dolphins made their hit parade.

Over at the Francisco
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JON PEREZ

PTI Dolphins batter Roque Camacho waits for the throw of Shell Marianas Suns pitcher Paul Celis in their game in the Majors division of the Saipan Little League on Wednesday at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.

Nepaial-led quartet tops April Fools golf

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Reigning Refaluwasch Golf Association Club Championship title-holder Andy Nepaial led his team in winning the coveted yellow Hawaiian jacket in the Inaugural Dan Hughes Memorial Tournament of Fools Golf Tournament last April 1 at the Laolao Bay Golf Course east course.

Nepaial, who won the 2007 season-ending RGA Cup in December last year, teamed up with Richard Pierce, Alex S. Sablan, and Dan Harding to win the tournament, which is held in memory of former Coffee Care owner Dan Hughes.

The quartet shot a low gross score of 59 but with the double Peoria format tournament, earned

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Dan Harding poses with the yellow Hawaiian jacket after his team won the Inaugural Dan Hughes Memorial Tournament of Fools Golf Tournament last April 1 at the Laolao Bay Golf Course east course. Joining Harding in the team were Richard Pierce, Andy Nepaial, and Alex Sablan.

JON PEREZ

Villafria to hold fundraising for Japan trip

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Roadrunner Ronald Villafria will be holding a fundraising event next month to help finance his scheduled trip to Tokyo, Japan, where he will compete in the 2008 Mt. Fuji Marathon of Fuji Tozan race on July 25.

Villafria said he is planning to hold a 5-kilometer fun run tentatively set on May 24, Saturday, to defray the cost of his ticket for his Japan trip.

He added he would check with the Marianas Visitors Authority on the date of the Ayuda Fun Run in order not to conflict with the schedule of his fundraising activity.

The Coco's Restaurant employee said he already talked to Northern Marianas Athletics secretary general Robin Sapong to help him in recording the times of the participants, while he would also seek assistance from other businesses to provide prizes.

Aside from the businesses and
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Villafria

